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# **Drifting in the Dead Zone in Cyprus:**

## **the mediation of memory through expanded life writing**

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A thesis submitted for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
University of the Arts London for the award of Doctor of Philosophy.

October 2013



## Abstract

Nicosia, a medieval walled city in Cyprus, was divided by a ‘green line’ in 1964 and remains the last divided capital city in Europe. This thesis deploys poesis and performance to interrogate the border as a site of reminiscence at the intersection of multiple and contested collective memory-narratives. In order to explore the nature of individual and collective memory the thesis challenges a series of physical and conceptual border zones: the disciplinary and discursive boundaries between poetry and philosophy; the border between memory and identity; the border between collective and individual memory and the physical terrain of the border that divides Nicosia.

The *dérive*, translocated from Paris to Nicosia, is used to explore these borders through an autoethnographic poetics that crosses the fields of poetry, anthropology and art practice. Walking and the practice arising from it speak back to the border. The connections between poetry, performance, collective memories and mediated subjectivities are investigated through a multimedia totality of poetics that deploys film, photography and live performance as well as writing. The thesis consists of this written exegesis and documentation of the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*, the website *MemoryMap*, the film-poem DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting* and *The Archive of Lost Objects*, a book of poetry and photography. This multimedia collection seeks to capture the complexity, diversity and fluidity of the phenomenological experience of memory and subjectivity. This thesis proposes and identifies a field of expanded life writing that is distinct from but related in ethos to the category of expanded cinema, to define such practice. The knowledge that arises out of the *dérives* is represented in a thesis that attempts to capture the multiplicity (though not the totality) and interrelationships of the discourses and practices that inform my border memories.



## Declaration

I certify that no part of the thesis has been included in a submission for any other degree or qualification and is not currently being submitted for any degree other than that of Doctor of Philosophy being studied at the University of the Arts London. I also declare that this work is the result of my own investigation except where otherwise identified by references and that I have not plagiarized another's work.

A number of people collaborated with me on the practical aspects of my work: Guy Penwill designed the DVD interface and assisted on booklet design for the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting*. Stephen Kennedy composed and produced the music and Nuno Salihbegovic provided technical and scenographic assistance for the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*. Kieran McMillan and Adam Coward designed the website interface and user content management system for the *MemoryMap* website.

Work produced for this thesis has been published and exhibited in the interim before submission. The autoethnographic essay *Translating and Mutating Identities: Cypriots Who Write in English*, which appears in the poetry collection *The Archive of Lost Objects*, was published in The Series of Modern Turkish Cypriot Literature Volume 7, *Literary Criticism and Study*. Ed. Murat Bulbulcu Freebirds Press, Cyprus, 2009.

Poems and prose from *The Archive of Lost Objects* also appeared in *Cadences* vol. 3 no. 1 and 2, Cyprus, 2007; The Series of Modern Turkish Cypriot Literature Volume 1, *Poetry*. Ed Suzan Yilmaz. Freebirds Press, Cyprus, 2009; *Literature Marginalised?* Ed. Horea, Visan et al. Romanian Cultural Institute, Bucharest, 2010; *Kunapipi Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 'Cyprus Issue' 2011 and *Arteri* Issue 12-13, Cyprus, 2011.

Film poems from the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting* were exhibited at *PM NOW* (Group Show) PM Gallery, London W5, 2008 and *Borders and Identities* (Group Show) Stephen Lawrence Gallery, London SE10, 2008.

The performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* was performed at :  
University of Greenwich/ Birkbeck College Cross Genre Poetics Event, 2010.  
Side Streets Cultural Centre, Nicosia, 2011  
Live at the Tate, Tate Britain, London, 2011  
ARTos Foundation, Nicosia, 2012

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I made a number of field trips to Cyprus 2006-2012 for this thesis and would like to particularly thank Dr. Mehmet Yashin, the poet and literary theorist and Dr. Stavros Karayanni literary theorist and editor of *Cadences* literary journal for their warm hospitality and for extended and invaluable conversations about Cypriot memory, poetry and history. I would also like to thank Ahmet Cem, journalist and amateur film-maker and Mualla Cem, actress for their reminiscences and for giving me video and DVD copies of their super eight home movies, another central text for my creative interrogations.

I completed this thesis whilst working full-time as Head of the Department of Communication and Creative Arts at the University of Greenwich. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Stephen Kennedy for his intellectual and moral support and for composing all music for my performances. I would also like to thank Dr. Nuno Salihbegovic for his work on the scenography for my performances and installations and Professor Alessandro Benati, Director of Research for the School of Humanities, University of Greenwich, for research funding support for international performances, conference papers and key-notes related to this thesis.

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“Remembrance restores possibility to the past, making what happened incomplete and completing what never was. Remembrance is neither what happened nor what did not happen but, rather, their potentialization, their becoming possible once again.”

Giorgio Agamben, *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*

In our moments of megalomaniacal reverie, we tend to see our memory as a kind of history book: we have won and lost battles, discovered empires and abandoned them... A more modest and perhaps more fruitful approach might be to consider the fragments of memory in terms of geography. In every life we would find continents, islands, deserts, swamps, overpopulated territories and *terrae incognitae*. We could draw the map of such a memory and extract images from it with greater ease (and truthfulness) than from tales and legends.

Chris Marker, liner notes from the English edition of the CD-ROM *Immemory*.





## Introduction



Cyprus serves as the ground of investigation for this creative research project and provides the contested terrain of collective memory practices and autobiographical reminiscence for the art practice and theoretical thesis arising out of that research. The general field of enquiry is autobiographical and memorialising practice across art and literature; focussing particularly on memory practices in Cyprus, in Turkish and English language poetics in particular, and the interrelationship between poetry, performance, and mediated collective memories and subjectivities.

My research practice deploys multimedia poetics in addition to this written thesis in order to explore the borders between recollection, performance and experience and to interrogate how the media used for memory practices determine the kinds of memories created. My creative research is presented in the form of a book and 3 DVDs that accompany this thesis. *The Archive of Lost Objects* is a book of 179 pages consisting of 85 poems and prose fragments, 2 scripts, a short story, an

autoethnographic essay and 33 black and white photographs. The DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting: journeys in the dead zone* contains 6 photo essays or film poems, consisting of spoken word and photo slide shows (total viewing time 18 minutes) and four silent slideshows of 89 photographs. An 8-page booklet accompanies this DVD. The DVD *Memory in the Dead Zone* is a 40-minute film documentation of the performance of my multimedia autobiography at Side Streets Cultural Centre in Nicosia in 2011. The third DVD *MemoryMap Drift* is a 40 minute film that documents a drift through my website *MemoryMap.org.uk*,<sup>1</sup> documenting one of many possible journeys through the site and presenting another kind of autobiography.<sup>2</sup>

The Nicosia border zone in particular is the focus and locus for the work. My childhood memories of growing up in the Turkish Cypriot enclave and departure from the island in 1974 are delineated through creative practice, poetry and performance. My creative research deploys an autoethnographic methodology, an approach that seeks to deconstruct as much as to express or represent the self of memory and the process of remembering itself. The resultant translocated autobiography produced by this creative process in poetry, performance and related creative production contains the autoethnographic deconstructive process within it, rather than producing a smooth narrative that excises or explains away contradiction and indeterminacy. Representing the contradiction and indeterminacy inherent in an investigation of collective

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<sup>1</sup> The website is a user content management system, which from its inception in January 2011 to April 2013 has attracted 265 members who have contributed a total of 720 projects to the site (this includes 81 of my own projects). Between 08.01.2011-04.04.2013 the website had 18,050 visits and 116,886 pages have been viewed.

<sup>2</sup> The *Memory in the Dead Zone* event on the website provides a digital archive of extensive documentation of different stages of my creative research. The event consists of 26 projects which document the performance, records of my drifts, my notebooks, altered books and objects through 588 photographs and 47 texts produced by me and 27 tracks of music by other artists, one recorded interview and 41 links to videos (some of my own performances and also clips by others) on YouTube and Vimeo.

memories of which you are a part involves writing in several registers simultaneously, so the distanced bird's eye point of view and impersonalised conventions of academic writing is not constant within the thesis. In order to reflect the haptic uncertainty and contingency of the act of remembering and the moment remembered as well as the organising narratives of official and unofficial collective memory, writing in autobiographic and mythic poetic registers intrudes to disrupt and interrogate the unity and chronology that emerges out of narrativisation, whether in philosophy, literature or popular culture.

Building on my established practice as a poet and performer and my previous poetry collection *Venus Inferis* (2004), which sought to create a mythologised autobiography, this project extends my poetics beyond written and performed poetry and proceeds through a creative interrogation of philosophy through creative writing and a multimedia totality of poetics that deploys film, photography and live performance as well as writing. This multimedia poetics seeks to capture the complexity, diversity and fluidity of the phenomenological experience of memory and subjectivity.

This thesis contextualises my practice in relation to that of a range of international artists and theorists whose work explores memory, particularly in the context of emigration, exile and bereavement and explores how and why I have deployed a series of multimedia autoethnographic art practices to research memory. Interrogating my personal history and memories of childhood through creative practice, my creative research strategy has been to use a range of cultural contexts and media to produce a diverse range of outputs beginning through walking, archiving, reverie, writing and moving off the page through performance. These works explore the nature of memory and its relation to identity, how the mediation of memory

influences the nature of memory, the spaces and places of memory, the relationship between collective memory and personal memory, the politics of the archive and the representation of memory.

My poetic practice is an explicit and active dialogue with, and seeks to realise, philosophy in the discursive practice of poetry, and in doing so to challenge the boundaries between the two. The first of my contributions to poetics in a Cypriot context is through my autobiographical practice of the Situationist *dérive* (Knabb, 2006) transposed from Western Europe to its southernmost capital, at the Nicosia border zone. Walking as an extension, preparation for and performance of writing is central to the practice, the *dérive* is deployed to speak back to the official archives and memories of the border through performative poetics both in the everyday and in culturally designated spaces of performance. The transposition of this art practice to a Middle Eastern peripherally and problematically European city allows me to explore and enunciate temporal and spatial translocations of personal and collective memory and memory practices.

My innovative contribution to the field of Cypriot poetic practice and performance arises through an active autoethnographic engagement with philosophy, both as a source of inspiration and as a conceptual framework for the performance of memory practice. Specifically, this involves a central creative engagement with, and an interrogation of, the Freudian concept of the screen memory. Deleuze's interpretation of Bergsonian time (Deleuze, 1994), and the concept of becoming through difference and repetition are also cornerstones of the practice, and key to the theoretical framework of the thesis itself. My multimedia performance, film-poems and website are innovative in the ways in which they take Cypriot poetry beyond the current conventions of publication and performance.

My thesis proposes and claims a field of ‘expanded life writing’ analogous to that of ‘expanded cinema’ as a transformative space for poetics, which takes autobiographical practice off the page just as expanded cinema takes film out of the conventional cinematic apparatus. I define this space through the work of a diverse body of artists making work that explores the self and autobiography in a range of media and deploying diverging strategies. When their work is considered as a field of autobiographical practice, as practitioners of expanded life writing, Claude Cahun, Charlotte Saloman, Laurie Anderson, Mona Hatoum, Anne Carson and Tracey Emin offer a breadth of approaches but also some consistent creative strategies - the constant slippage between media and disciplinary practices and the production of works which often inhabit interstitial spaces between cultural practices. This designation enables a remapping of a range of literary and art practitioners’ autobiographical work in relation to each other, in order to trace the ways in which peripheral, mutable and evanescent gender and cultural subjectivities, previously impossible to express are brought into being and performed through modes of writing at the intersections of literature and memoir, text and image.

The ghost of Freud has been my constant companion from the inception of the project to its completion. His concept of the screen memory, of the fragmentary recollections from early childhood that precede our ability to narrativise our memories (Freud, 1899), is central to my practice, and becomes physically manifested in my performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* where memory is projected on different kinds of screens, including a shroud, a suitcase and a Lefkara needle work table cloth hung on a washing line. Freud’s methodology in his essay on screen memories is to investigate data (the Henri brothers’ survey of early childhood memory) through a fiction in which he performs different versions of himself, as analyst and as one who

remembers. Drawing on Freud's essay, theory, fiction and autobiography are all actors in my methodology. I investigate my memories through fractured and multiplied selves and autobiographical fictions. Ultimately my research asks what is the relationship between self-narration, the performance of the self and memory?

My creative practice, beginning with the walks themselves, the poetry book, hybrid performance-lectures, the DVD, performances and the website are discussed in a loosely chronological order of production in each chapter. The thesis proceeds by first asking what modes of autobiography and autobiographical performance my Nicosian *dérives* produce, then exploring my creative context for these *dérives* in literature, art and Freud's work on screen memory. I then go on to situate my memory practice in relation to the terrains of collective memory practices in poetry and anthropology in a Cypriot context. The collective and private memory practices and archives produced by photography in Cyprus are then discussed in relation to my personal familial archive and to the ways in which digital convergence has transformed the personal archive.

The first chapter situates my practice in Cyprus from the formation of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 to the present and outlines how and why the Nicosia border zone serves as the site of my *dérives*. Simmel's social type of the stranger, not as one who is passing through, but as one whose presence marks the boundaries of belonging, provides me with an identificatory position in my autoethnographic drifts on the borders between history and autobiography, art and anthropology, poetry and autoethnography and walking practice and political enunciation (Simmel, 1971). I discuss how my work develops through finding and making maps, collaging and the construction of multimedia performances and artefacts arising out of my Nicosia *dérives* and my broader drift from Havana to other real, imagined and dreamt cities.

The second chapter explores the work of Jamal Mahjoub, Aamer Hussein, Emine Sevgi Ozdamar and Orhan Pamuk, writers within the field of postcolonial life writing (Moore-Gilbert, 2009). These writers are identified as key because their writing explores the slippages, melodies and dissonances inherent in acts of translation and communication across contested languages and national territories.<sup>3</sup> Whilst their writing is very different from mine in that it is prose and is more ‘purely’ literary practice, their work brings history, politics, the ghosts of other languages and intensely autobiographical thinking together at the boundaries of the memoir, the novel, the short story and the essay. Their work provided a useful perspective for writing my walking practice. My work *The Archive of Lost Objects* is discussed in relation to a proposed field of expanded life writing. The concept of translocation, defined as movement in both the form and content of the work, is identified as central to the field of expanded life writing because it encompasses memory shifts, geographical movement, movements across media and movement as theme.

The third chapter of this thesis focuses on expanded life writing as a field of creative practice that enables new perspectives on self-narration in the field of art. I focus on the work of several antecedent artists: Claude Cahun’s photography and autobiographical poem-essay *Disavowals* (1930), Charlotte Saloman’s *Life or Theatre?* (1943), Mona Hatoum’s *Measures of Distance* (1988), Laurie Anderson’s work, particularly *Delusion* (2010), Tracey Emin’s *Strangeland* (2005) and Anne Carson’s *NOX* (2010). I develop the concept of expanded life writing and map the field of practice by discussing their diverse and differing strategies and sources of

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<sup>3</sup> Mahjoub, Hussein and Ozdamar are fluent in languages other the one they write in, whilst Pamuk is heavily dependent on English translation for his world readership. The ghosts of other languages are implicitly present, just as in my work the ghosts of Turkish and Greek haunt the text. Mahjoub is a bilingual Sudanese writer, Hussein writes in English, is a native speaker of Urdu and is conversant in French, Italian and Spanish. Ozdamar’s mother tongue is Turkish and she chooses to write in German.



inspiration for taking autobiography beyond text and off the page through photography, painting, sewing, film, installation and performance.

The fourth chapter explains the intellectual and creative strategies I have deployed in my creative engagement with Freud's work on memory, considers his influence on contemporary art and how I have been inspired by his essay *Screen Memories* (1899) to investigate the frozen and fragmentary nature of the screen memory in my practice culminating in the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting*. The Freud I evoke undermines the fixity of memory and provides a descriptive (partly autobiographical and fictionalised) model for the creative process and is freed from deterministic Oedipal readings through the Guattarian concept of schizoanalysis (Guattari, 1995).

In the fifth chapter I move from the individual moment of recollection, which Freud places centre stage in his essay, in order to situate my practice within the collective memories of the border zone as archived within the literary canons of Greek and Turkish Cypriot poetics and Cypriot poetry in English. Two poets and theorists, the anthropologist, filmmaker, literary theorist and poet Stephanos Stephanides and the poet and theorist Mehmet Yashin are key to these border poetics. In their roles as literary theorists and editors both look beyond the linguistic borders of poetics in Cyprus and offer new genealogies and possibilities for Cypriot literary identity. My border poetics is enunciated through the movement between times of memory, places of exile and emigration, different languages, media and cultural contexts and between theory and practice as a series of relays in my site specific performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*.

The sixth chapter contextualises my work as part of Cypriot collective memory practices, as an enunciation at the borders of anthropology, within the field of

anthropoetics (Behar, 1996). Having located my poetics in the territories of Cypriot literary practice in the last chapter this chapter considers how Greek, Turkish, refugee, exile, settler and immigrant Cypriot identities are created through commemorative performance, pilgrimage and ritual. The work of three anthropologists working on how collective memory practices in Cyprus create the sense of place (Loizos), acts of narration (Papadakis) and imagined space (Bryant) is considered in relation to my autoethnographic practice.

Continuing to investigate the connections between official, family and private modes of memory the seventh chapter goes on to explore how the medium of photography and the photographic archive has shaped and represented both collective and individual memory and identity in Cyprus in the past and how digital memory practices, particularly my website [www.memorymap.org.uk](http://www.memorymap.org.uk) speak to those archives and transform them by blurring the boundaries between private and public, personal and creative archives.

## Chapter 1: Memory and the Border Dérive



### Memory and Cyprus

Cyprus is an island with a rich and varied cultural heritage. The Achaeans, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Macedonians, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Lusignans, Venetians, Ottomans and British have all ruled the island and left their mark on its architecture, languages and customs (Hill, 1952). Cyprus has been a trade route for millennia, served as key site en route to the Crusades, a place of exile, of refuge, of new beginnings as well as the site of countless wars (Pantelli, 1990). Suleiman the Magnificent had a plan to give it to the Jews as a homeland (Inalcik, 2002). Kittim, Yatnana, Kypros, Kibris, Cyprus has had many names and languages and they have all left their mark on the palimpsest of its literature (Yashin, 2000). Today the majority of islanders, about 80%, are Greek Cypriot.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 20% are Turkish Cypriot;<sup>5</sup> Turkish-speaking numbers have been swelled since 1974 by mainland Turkish and Kurdish settlers (Hatay, 2008, p.169).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Greek Cypriot 2011 census: population 838,897; 78.6% Cypriot, 21.4% Non-Cypriot (The Statistical Service of the Republic of Cyprus <http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/732265957BAC953AC225798300406903?OpenDocument&sub=2&sel=1&e=&print> (accessed 12.01.13)

<sup>5</sup> Turkish Cypriot 2006 census; (de facto population) 265,100; 66.7% TRNC, 29.3% Turkey, 4.0% other (The TRNC General population and Housing Census 2006).

<sup>6</sup> 'There are no current figures on regional origins of immigrants, but a 2000 survey showed that 37.2%

There are also small but longstanding Armenian and Maronite communities as well as more recent arrivals: British and Middle Eastern expatriates, Russian international investors, East European, African and Far Eastern guest workers, and tourists. Many Cypriots have left the island, for economic as well as political reasons, and the Cypriot Diaspora extends from Silicon Valley to Sydney. Since British colonial rule London, in particular, has been home to a large Greek and Turkish Cypriot community (Anthias, 1992; Canefe, 2002).

Nicosia,<sup>7</sup> a medieval walled city in Cyprus, was divided by a ‘green line’ in 1964, again in 1974, and remains the last divided capital city in Europe (O’Malley and Craig, 1999). While the border between the two communities was opened in Nicosia in 2003 the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities continue to live separated by a ‘dead zone’ (Navaro-Yashin, 2003; Papadakis, 2005). My creative practice explores the border as a site of reminiscence at the intersection of multiple collective memory-narratives that perpetuate insularity, distrust and political deadlock in the Cypriot context.

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of the manual workforce came from the Hatay region of Turkey, while another 15.8% came from the country’s southeast. The remaining 47% comes from other regions of Turkey, especially in the south, or from third countries’ (Hatay, 2008, p.169).

<sup>7</sup> I will use the English name of the city, Nicosia to denote the whole city, its Greek name Lefkosia to indicate the Greek area and Lefkoşa to indicate the Turkish sector of the city. The name of the city has a long history:

‘Historians believe that as far back as 280 BC. There was a town called Ledra in the centre of Cyprus. Then follows a gap in history for more than a thousand years, when it is recorded that a walled city stood in the Mesaoria plain and its name was Lefkosa or Lefkosia. The modern name of Nicosia arose in the 19th century when an English soldier corrupted the word, because he did not listen carefully to the inhabitants’ pronunciation (so the story goes).

However, the name Nicosia was used in the Middle Ages. A quick glance at the earlier pages of the source-book, ‘Excerpta Cypria’, will soon show the antiquity of the name Nicosia. The first reference is in the journal of the German Count Wilbrand von Oldenburg who, in the year 1211 AD wrote in good Latin an account of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land when he visited Cyprus on his return journey. In fact he did not get it quite right for he says that ‘Cossia’ was the capital city, but this looks like the first attempt to transliterate the Byzantine Greek into Latin. The new reference is conclusive and gives us the immense authority of Dante Alighieri, the great and extremely well-informed Italian epic poet who uses ‘Nicosia e Famagosta’ when writing in the ‘Paradiso’ about King Henry II of Lusignan. Dante wrote this in about 1305’ (Dreghorn, 1995).

The statement 'I don't forget' is emblazoned across Greek children's school exercise books, the promise 'we will not forget' is used in official propaganda on the Turkish side (Papadakis, 2008). Yet the official memories of each community are at odds: what is to be remembered, and how, is politically controversial and fiercely contested. The memories of individuals vary and both confirm and contradict the official rhetoric of their politicians. In such an environment certain kinds of memory and ways of remembering, become ideologically coded, over-signified activities.

In order to explore the nature of individual and collective memory and its political repercussions my poetic practice seeks to challenge a series of physical and conceptual border zones or thresholds: the disciplinary and discursive boundaries between poetry, theory and autobiography; the border between memory and identity; the border between collective and individual memory; the physical terrain of the border that divides Nicosia, as both what Nora (1996) would term a *lieu* and a contested *milieu de memoire* (of war, of childhood, of Cypriot identities) and the borders between recollection, performance and experience.

### **The Border as Dead Zone**

A border, the dead zone, is both geographically and conceptually at the heart of Nicosia. It is officially produced: first established as the Green Line in 1964 because of the green pen Major-General Peter Young used to bifurcate Nicosia, formerly established in barbed wire as the Mason-Dixon line in 1956, it marked the limit of the enclave the Turkish Cypriots inhabited, until the coup and the ensuing war in 1974 turned that line into an impermeable, uncrossable zone (Packard, 2008). The Dead Zone serves as a sort of memorial. However unlike officially sanctioned memorials which aspire to the status of *lieu de memoire*, like the small kitsch, pigeon bedevilled

statue of Dr Fazil Küçük, the first Vice President of the Republic of Cyprus, just outside Kyrenia Gate<sup>8</sup> in the northern part of the city and the giant statue of Archbishop Makarios the first President of The Republic of Cyprus, in the Southern part of Nicosia for instance;<sup>9</sup> which both have a formal preferred reading, the border is a space which can offer up no single uncontested, coherent meaning. The dead zone acts as a compromised, or abject, milieu de memoire, a site where personal and political memory meet, a palimpsest of inter-communal conflict, most of all a memory of a handful of hot weeks beginning on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1974.<sup>10</sup>

The purpose of the lieu de memoire, to fix and inscribe official memory on the landscape is fulfilled at the Ledra Palace checkpoint (the first pedestrian border crossing was opened in 2003 by the Turkish Cypriot administration shortly before the Annan Plan referendum) by the Turkish, Greek, Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot and United Nations flags which conventionally assert contested territorial and historical claims. However the lieu de memoire of the border zone have a provisional and hysterical character as can be seen in the faded images of photographs of the Greek Cypriot refugees from the 1974 war posted up by the Ledra Palace crossing point at the Greek Cypriot checkpoint in the Republic of Cyprus on the southern side and by the sign in red letters on a yellow background that proclaims ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus FOREVER’. The hyperbolic emphasis on its timelessness, the aggressive

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<sup>8</sup> See Hatay (2008) for a discussion of the statue’s pigeon problem and Turkish Cypriot identity.

<sup>9</sup> The 11 tonne 10 metre high statue by Nikos Kotziamanis was sculpted in 1987 and erected in 1993. In 2008 The new Archbishop, Chrysostomos II stated that the statue was out of proportion with its surroundings and ordered its removal from outside the Archbishop’s Palace in the centre of Nicosia to Archbishop Makarios’ burial place near Kykkoss Monastery in the mountains. The statue was replaced by a life size white marble statue of Archbishop Makarios. (Makarios Statue to be Moved in August. *Cyprus Mail* (03/07/2008). Available at <http://www.cyprus-mail.com/cyprus/makarios-statue-be-moved-august>. Accessed 03.07.08.)

<sup>10</sup> The Cypriot National Guard and EOKA B led by the Greek Junta launched a coup to overthrow the democratically-elected President, Archbishop Makarios III on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 1974. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July the Turkish invasion began with war ships landing on the northern coast of the island.

nature of its assertion, invites questions around its ephemerality.<sup>11</sup>



Figure 1. Ledra Palace Border Crossing into the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, 2006 by Alev Adil

Nora (1996) sees the process of memory becoming history, of losing a living relation to the past, as profoundly political. Whereas premodern societies lived in a continuous past, a ‘milieu’ an environment, of memory we now experience our past through ‘lieu’, politically and/or culturally consecrated ‘places’ of memory like statuary and architecture. The past is erased, as it becomes spatialised through explicit signs ‘lieu’ rather than ‘milieu’ of implicit meaning. The official art of the two communities, the statues, museums and architecture speak of the state-sponsored lieu de memoire explicitly created by the two political entities. The dead zone is marked by hyperbolic nationalist symbolism, by the physical signs of war: barbed wire, ruins, the rusting hulk of a bus and reminders of the boundaries of citizenship: the demand for official

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<sup>11</sup> After the 1974 conflict the Turkish Cypriot territory, which included Greek Cypriot land taken in the 1974 Turkish invasion, came under the jurisdiction of a democratic, but legally unrecognised entity called the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus. In November 1983 the Parliament of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus became the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In November 1983 The Security Council of the UN adopted Resolution 541, which described the attempt to create TRNC as ‘legally invalid’, called for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Independence, and asked all countries not to recognise the new republic. The Republic of Cyprus considers itself to have legal jurisdiction over all the island and regards TRNC as an illegal entity, the Turkish Cypriot sector as occupied territory.

identity papers, interdictions - no photography, no entry. The space between the two competing and conflicting official ideological markers is several hundred yards of overgrown ruin that is the no man's land, where one is not allowed to dawdle or wander.



Figure 2. Barricade on the border, 2006 by Alev Adil

The dead zone is an abject lieu, a ruined space (of failed nationalistic and community identities) that cannot communicate one dominant and naturalised historical meaning. This physical milieu de memoire, which refuses forgetting but also refuses any single dominant meaning, is a product and representation of the zone of contestation. The dead zone is an official manifestation of the intercommunal conflicts of 1963 and 1974 but the border is an abject space in contrast to the official monuments which glorify and memorialise, this place does not celebrate the past in ruins as a lieu de memoire conventionally does (Woodward, 2001, Navarro-Yashin, 2009). Neither is it straightforwardly an organic premodern milieu of memoire as defined by Nora (1996). This is a zone that can only be traversed with the right documentation but



lingering or memorialising the place is not sanctioned. No photography is allowed here. It is a compromised any-space-whatever (Deleuze, 1989)) of *memoire*. Thus it is an especially damned (and thus perhaps especially sanctified) virtual and actual space when it comes to delineating how the politically abject is begotten in memory, especially if one sees all of Northern Cyprus as a dead zone (Navarro-Yashin, 2003).

### **The Border, the Dead Zone as Autoethnographical Terrain**

The abject nature of the border is one that some theorists like the anthropologist Navarro-Yashin highlight. Yet the quotidian experience of the border is much more various and complicated than the theorisation of it simply as a dead or abject space encompasses. The appellation dead zone implies that the space is at the end of signification, which childhood memories of inhabiting that area complicate and contradict. I was born in the old city, in the Turkish quarter of Nicosia and lived first in a house on Abdicavus Street and then in an apartment block on Tanzimat Street, both very close to the Green Line, between 1967-1974. Crossing the military checkpoint was an everyday occurrence because I crossed to the Greek side in order to attend the Junior School, an English primary school side during term time and to go swimming at the Ledra Palace Hotel<sup>12</sup> in the holidays and at weekends. Thus two kinds of analysis, of theorisations of the border zone and of memories of that border operate in tandem. This leads to two kinds of writing within the thesis, of the braiding of autobiographical and theoretical points of view, and the intrusion of the 'I' in academic writing.

Mine was not a typical Turkish Cypriot childhood. My mother is English, I

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<sup>12</sup> The Ledra Palace Hotel is now administered by the United Nations and has provided an office for PRIO, The Peace Research Institute Oslo) since 1999 in order to facilitate dialogue between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. My photographs of abandoned items in their storeroom there can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/locked-room>.

grew up in a bilingual household, went to school with an international, mainly diplomatic, and Greek Cypriot cohort and spent a lot of time, shopping, going to the cinema, going to the swimming pool etc. on the Greek side. My closest school friends were Greek or Greek Cypriot. During the enclave years 1963-1974 this was unusual.<sup>13</sup> Most Turkish Cypriots had moved into the overcrowded enclaves, the island was heavily militarised, the threat of war and intercommunal violence seemed always imminent and freedom of movement was limited. Journeys between enclaves and to the beach were undertaken under UN convoy, although I made frequent pedestrian crossings to the Greek side with my mother.



Figure 3. The house I was born in on Abdicavus Street, 2011 by Alev Adil

The border, especially the Ledra Palace crossing close to my childhood home emerged as a central site for my reminiscence. As well as providing the literal space of childhood memory, the border emerged as a central source of inspiration and

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<sup>13</sup> In the years from 1974-2003 it became impossible to cross the border. Since the borders reopened in 2003 there are once more a small number of Turkish Cypriot children who cross to the Republic for educational purposes.

central metaphor for my practice. I explored the conceptual, disciplinary and discursive boundaries between poetry, theory and autobiography, the border between written and visual languages, between representation and non-representation, collective and individual memory and between memory and identity. The self who remembers and the self in memory proved a fertile ground for exploring the *unheimlich*<sup>14</sup> homeliness of the border terrain, the Dead Zone, my childhood home.

I approach the border in an autoethnographic mode, the camera, the voice, the body, all are particular and embodied forms of practice; neither the camera nor the voice look from above. Ellis and Bochner (2000) advocate autoethnography as a form of writing that makes ‘the researcher's own experience a topic of investigation in its own right’ (Ellis and Bochner, p.733) instead of appearing to be ‘written from nowhere by nobody’ (Ellis and Bochner, p.734). Autoethnographers ‘ask their readers to feel the truth of their stories and to become co-participants, engaging the storyline morally, emotionally, aesthetically, and intellectually’ (Ellis and Bochner, p.745). The reflexive and autoethnographical turn in anthropology (Clifford and Markus, 1986; Geertz, 1988) questions the epistemological hierarchies at work between the ethnographer, the native informant and the native object/subject of study and moves from a scientific-objectivist to an interpretive-relativist approach, and from claims of neutrality to a concern with normative value systems. Autoethnography is ‘an autobiographical genre of writing that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural’ (Ellis and Bochner, p.739). The theorist Carol Rambo uses it as a ‘layered account writing format as a postmodern reporting technique’ that enables the researcher ‘to incorporate multiple voices including

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<sup>14</sup> Freud defines the *unheimlich*, or uncanny as the class of frightening things that leads us back to what is known and familiar. The *unheimlich* is not an opposition to the *Heimlich*, the homely, private, and intimate. Rather than a fear of the unknown, or of intellectual indeterminacy, the *unheimlich* marks the return of the repressed, of fear of the familiar (Freud, 1919, 217)

theory, subjective experience, fantasy, and more to convey aspects of a topic at hand that would be otherwise excluded from a more traditional format' (Rambo, 2005, p. 563).

Clifford Geertz's notion of 'Being Here' and 'Being There' highlights the division and attendant power relation between the 'here' of academic, in Clifford's example anthropological, discourse and the 'there' of fieldwork (Geertz, 1988). Such self-conscious ethnography acknowledges and brings into being the thresholds and possibilities of dialogues and exchanges between the 'here' and the 'there' of history and memory, of individual recollection and collective record.

My work is situated in this threshold between the 'here' and 'there'ness of philosophy, poetry, history and autobiography, and refuses the primacy, meta-narratives and epistemological superiority of any particular discourse. Both the theory and praxis of autoethnography offer serious challenges to the Aristotelian distinction between theorising and making. Theory and practice are as intimately bound together as the remembering and remembered subject/object of autobiographical memory. Philosophy, or the 'theoretical' is not outside the creative process yet the work also resists claims of emotional primacy and authenticity as much as it evades academic authority. The 'I' distanced through self-analysis returns, but not as the voice of authority or of authenticity, rather as a singular (but not individualist) iteration of collective memory. For Mark Neuman, rather than an unproductive relativism autoethnography offers the possibility of the recognition of a doubled and contested subjectivity, which is

a form of critique and resistance that can be found in diverse literatures such as ethnic autobiography, fiction, memoir, and texts that identify zones of contact, conquest, and the contested meanings of self and culture that accompanies the

exercise of representational authority' (Neuman, 1996, p. 191). Autoethnography (like memory) is a process of making the self other, an object of study as much as the subject who investigates. The process of autoethnographic, rather than simply autobiographical research through photography, filming, writing, collaging and reappropriating, performance and academic research seeks to destabilise and reconfigure the givens of memory and identity, not to shore them up. 'Personal narrative performance gives shape to social relations, but because such relations are multiple, polysemic, complexly interconnected, and contradictory, it can do so only in unstable and destabilizing ways for narrator *and* audience . . . a story of the body told through the body which makes cultural conflict concrete' (Langellier, 1999, p. 208).

For Spry (2001) autoethnographic performance is 'the convergence of the 'autobiographic impulse' and the 'ethnographic moment' represented through 'movement and critical self-reflexive discourse in performance, articulating the intersections of peoples and culture through the inner sanctions of the always migratory identity'. Spry employs the technique of bringing the poetic register into her academic writing and observes that 'emotion and poetics constitute scholarly treason, it is heresy put to good use' (Spry, 2001).

Autoethnography is not a flight from the rational or collective to the individual and emotional but a demand that we examine how both are interwoven. 'A reality is not a mere crossing from one border to another . . . Reality involves the crossing of an indeterminate number of border-lines, one that remains multiple in its hyphenation' (Trihn, 1991 p. 107). Neuroscience supports this mobile and mutable reading of memory and thus of reality. The neuroscientist Lehrer who draws strong parallels between the representations of memory produced by poetics and neuroscience describes how molecular mapping of the synaptic mark proceeds, and observes,

‘every time we conjure up our pasts, the branches of our recollections become malleable again. While the prisms that mark our memories are virtually immortal, their dendritic details are always being altered, shuttling between the poles of remembering and forgetting. The past is at once perpetual and ephemeral’ (Lehrer, 2007, p.94).

Borders of memory, perception, and interaction are traversed. I was and am always already the female Cypriot stranger, born as a woman in patriarchy, Turkish Cypriot in an ‘illegal’ enclave of the Republic in relation to my Cypriotness, a Turkish Cypriot with an English mother in relation to my Turkish-Cypriotness, a diasporic British Cypriot in relation to the island after my emigration to London. My Cypriot identity embodies Simmel’s social type of the stranger not as an outsider, one who is passing through, but rather serves as a constant figure, as one who marks the limits of belonging in a given community.

The stranger is an element of the group itself ... whose membership within the group involves both being outside it and confronting it ... fixed within a certain spatial circle – or within a group whose boundaries are analogous to spatial boundaries – but his position within it is fundamentally affected by the fact that he does not belong in it initially and that he brings qualities into it that are not, and cannot be, indigenous to it (Simmel, 1971, p.144).

Mine is a border identity, both literally and metaphorically. I both perform and inhabit the borders of differing kinds of Cypriot identity. The border is the scar that marks the site of collective trauma as the present fact of having been wounded and a boundary where difference can meet. The border is a zone where different kinds of memory meet: the Nietzschean ‘trained’ memory (Nietzsche, 2003), of official narratives that are static and institutionally articulated: passport control; of the internal, mobile, spontaneous, sensual flows and washes of Proustian memory (Proust,

1981; Deleuze and Guattari, 2000), which invite a poetics of reverie as an internal technology that negotiates strategies of identity creation through remembering as forgetting and reaches for transformation through reappropriation, remediation, recontextualisation, performance and projection.

### **Border Identities and Encounters**

The first task of research through the *dérive* in this auto-ethnographic exercise is to recognize oneself as one's own cultural intermediary, or spiritual medium perhaps. Thinking on foot through cities involves the company of ghosts, immersion in a given environment calls to mind another. Benjamin (1927) detects both the ghost of the Russian village and the contrasting ghost of Berlin as he wonders/wanders through Moscow. Circling back and forth around and through Abdicavus Street followed by inquisitive little street children I am in turn reminded of Benjamin's walk through Naples. I wander the streets of Havana, seeing Nicosia, both cities where embargoed time both slows down and speeds up,<sup>15</sup> all is in ruins as if centuries have passed, reminders of the past lie that little changed. Time dilates around the Dead Zone, in Nicosia generally, within the city walls of Lefkoşa one cannot escape memories of the long decade of the enclave and the last thirty-six years as the phantom limb of the Republic. For writer Helga Tawil-Souri, the ghost that leads her through Nicosia is the ghost of divided Jerusalem and she becomes disorientated, first identifying the border and Turkish Cypriot Nicosia beyond it as an echo of Israeli occupation, then seeing echoes of Palestinian East Jerusalem there. Halbwachs notes in his analysis of Jerusalem that memories 'lend themselves to enumeration, a

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<sup>15</sup> My photographic *dérive* projects comparing Havana and Nicosia are discussed further in Chapter 3 in relation to *An Architecture of Forgetting*. The photographic project *Stolen Time on MemoryMap* also explores this terrain <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/stolen-time>



successive review, so that thought does not remain immobile and so that, even though thought revolves around the same circle, interest is renewed by some diversity of appearances and events' (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 223).



Figure 4. Woman collecting kindling in the border zone, 2006 by Alev Adil

The images arising out of my photographic *dérives* are in the main landscapes and only include portraits as part of, or as a record of some sort of social interaction, with explicit approval. The *dérive* is not random, as Debord emphasizes (Debord, 2004). The artist-researcher is socially situated and to some extent defined by those who interact with them. Those who invite or avoid my camera's gaze do so because of who they think I am and what ends they imagine the image serves. How I feel too, is not simply individual, inside me; 'feeling comes from without, the thickness of sociality itself' (Ahmed, 2004 p.28).

I kept a note of how safe or unsafe I felt, the nature of my exchanges, their content and tone. I did not seek to carry out ethnographic interviews, rather I kept auto-ethnographic note of what exchanges arose when not intentionally initiated by me, and how I felt defined by them. My exchanges with people on these walks in



2006 were all in the (Turkish Cypriot) north, with an octogenarian Turkish Cypriot pensioner, a young mother and Turkish settler from South Eastern Turkey, a Kurdish shopkeeper in Abdicavus street, three Turkish Cypriot teenage school boys and a group of street children under the age of seven. In 2009 my walks resulted in extended exchanges with Nigerian University students and an elderly woman running a down at heel Lefkara lace shop in a small side street behind Ledra Street in the (Greek Cypriot) south and with an elderly woman running a similarly down at heel needlepoint shop at Lokmaci and a *yorganci*, a traditional eiderdown maker near Saint Sophia (now the Selimiye Mosque) in the north. In 2010 I met the elderly photographer Mehmet Şik and an entrepreneur restoring an Ottoman house near Saint Sofia and converting it into a restaurant in the north and a contemporary art gallery owner and a young Greek-Canadian soldier on military service in Ledra Street in the south.

A number of these exchanges with elderly shop owners arose out of my exploration of shops in old Nicosia, their shops and wares were an important part of the drift. I was attracted to a very dilapidated and dusty shop just behind Ledra Street, selling traditional Cypriot needlepoint and lace work. The chief exhibit in the shop's vitrine was a sleeping cat. The Lefkara tablecloth<sup>16</sup> I bought from the Greek Cypriot lady who owned both the cat and the shop was to become the central screen for my performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*. The shopkeeper was friendly in the extreme, very curious about my marital status. Perhaps because I led her to believe I was English, she regaled me vituperatively and at length about the centuries-old perfidy

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<sup>16</sup> Lefkara lace work, the distinct needlepoint of that village and region was developed under Venetian rule (1489-1571), the myth being that Venetian ladies summering in that district taught locals their embroidery skills and that the lace work was so highly valued by the Italians that Leonardo da Vinci visited the island in order to purchase some for Milan Cathedral. Lefkara lace became a profitable export from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The craft has a strong international, and European genesis, not only is the genesis of the craft attributed to the Venetians but embroidery is traditionally worked on Irish linen using French thread (*Cyprus Lefkara Lace*, Cyprus44).

and barbarism of the Turk. She had lost her shop in Kyrenia in 1974. She showed me pictures of a younger, very different, self. I felt uncomfortably complicit as the shopkeeper proceeded to project anti-Turkish histories and stories that excluded any possibility of any Turkish Cypriot belonging to Cyprus and to Cypriot traditions of handicraft onto the tablecloth.<sup>17</sup> Would she have done so had she known I was Turkish Cypriot? I had misled her out of habit,<sup>18</sup> and in doing so set the stage for a diatribe she might have preferred not to make directly to the Turkish Cypriot Other?<sup>19</sup> I had not presented myself to her as an ethnographer, as an artist or as a Turkish Cypriot. I had presented myself merely as a browser, and an English speaking stranger. I had not volunteered any information about who I was and thus in the process of the commercial exchange I had been given the performance of her identity (and the cloth's identity) usually performed for the tourist. I purchased the tablecloth for considerably more than its price in the North at the Handicrafts Cooperative. Letting her overcharge me seemed to be the cost of my uncertain, indeed dubious, role as observer. I had set out to observe myself, and in the process, in the unavoidable sociality of the drift this financial exchange had become an essential part of the

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<sup>17</sup> The tradition carries on to the present day amongst the Greek Cypriot community of Lefkara. The village of Lefkara was mixed until 1964 when the Turkish Cypriots had to leave the village and resettled in the nearby village of Gecitkale/Kofinou until 1974, when they had to move north where they continue this tradition (*Cyprus Lefkara Lace*, Cyprus44).

<sup>18</sup> Only a minority of Turkish Cypriots crossed into the Greek Cypriot area of Nicosia in between 1967 and 1974 for leisure and commercial purposes. We were always keen not to draw attention to ourselves as Turkish Cypriots. The memory of this was triggered suddenly and powerfully when I went out to dinner with a Turkish Cypriot friend and his young, multilingual daughter in 2006, to a charming Greek Cypriot village tavern, albeit adorned with ancient portraits of EOKA heroes from the 1950s. I recognized the tension in his voice that belied the anxiety that her behavior might draw attention to us as Turkish Cypriots, and the (and I realized familiar from my own childhood) parental reminder to speak only in English on the 'Greek side', 'rum tarafında'.

<sup>19</sup> The notion of the Other in the present research is used according to Jacques Lacan's distinction between other and Other. In particular, Lacan points out that Other (*Grand Autre*) designates a radical alterity which cannot be assimilated through identification. Lacan equates this alterity with language and the law. Consequently, for Lacan the Other is both the other subject in its radical alterity and also the symbolic order which mediates the relationship with that other subject. See Jacques Lacan (1998) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan* (Book XI).

present-performance of the commercial exchange and the future-performance I wanted the cloth for.



Figure 5. Mehmet Şik the photographer, 2010 by Alev Adil

As a result of my walks I also came across the photographic studio of the Turkish Cypriot photographer Mehmet Şik in the old Turkish quarter near the Buyuk Han. The heavily retouched 1960s studio portraits in the window of his shop immediately attracted me. His shop, our conversations and his archive of studio and landscape work were a huge source of inspiration and recollection both because he had been active as a photographer during my childhood and had specialized in studio portraits of children and because he identified me not as a stranger, as all the other subjects who approached me did, but as part of an ‘us’, as a ‘genuine’ member of the tribe of ‘old’ Lefkoşa. As soon as I entered his shop and expressed an enthusiasm for his work he identified me as a local girl who lived abroad. We spoke in Turkish, in the Turkish Cypriot dialect. ‘We don’t exist any more’, he told me. I took this to be reference to the increased mainland Turkish presence within the city walls. Poor immigrants have replaced Turkish Cypriot Nicosians, who have all moved to Köşklü

Çiftlik and more distant suburbs, turning their backs on the ruins of the border and the impoverished Turkish mainland immigrants who now occupy the centre. Şik's photographs of children who were my contemporaries are particularly powerful records of the particular and performative culture of a Turkish Cypriot enclave childhood.<sup>20</sup>

Other exchanges on my dérives raised questions around multiple belongings, through immigration (both from Turkey to the North and from India and South East Asia in the south), globalism, and the decay of the old inner city. Those who sought to detain me in conversation were at a loose end, the elderly, small children, bored youths, lonely foreign students and a Greek soldier looking for fun. The 'thickness of sociality' renders the memory of those encounters as warm, strange and open to multiple, not necessarily comfortable symbolic interpretations around belonging. The dérive explores how the city cannot be captured at a glance; the city is real and virtual, networks and perspectives, town planning (Abu-Orf, 2005) and dreaming. 'Real cities have a lot in common with Italo Calvino's 'invisible cities'' (Latour and Hermant, 2009).

Like Zebide in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, Nicosia is built according to the routes dreamers remember from their dream. Calvino's dreamers all dreamt of chasing the elusive fugitive figure of a naked woman, Zebide, through an imaginary city. 'The first to arrive could not understand what drew these people to Zebide, this ugly city, this trap' (Calvino, 1979, p.37). Venetian maps reveal Nicosia to be a dream of a city, maps reveal it to be a close precursor of the 'ideal city' Palmanova, founded

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<sup>20</sup> My remediations of these images can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/children-enclave-years>.

in 1593 to commemorate the Venetian victory against the Ottomans at Lepanto and built as fortress against Ottoman attacks from Bosnia.

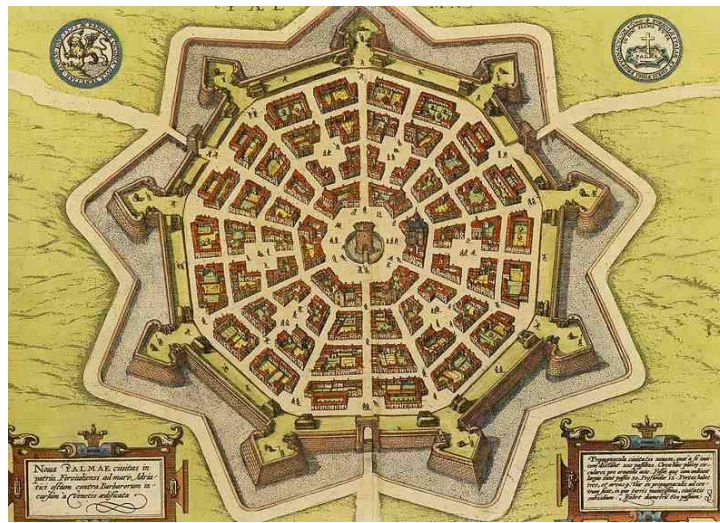


Figure 6. Map of Palmanova by Georg Braun & Frantz Hogenberg, 1572, Civitates Orbis Terrarum.

Palmanova, unlike Nicosia is built on Utopian ideals. Instead of tangled back streets Palmanova is designed as a geometric, concentric whole. Yet as the historian Edward Muir observes ‘despite the pristine conditions and elegant layout of the new city, no one chose to move there, and by 1622 Venice was forced to pardon criminals and offer them free building lots and materials if they would agree to settle the town. Thus began the forced settlement of this magnificent planned space, which remains lifeless to this day and is visited only by curious scholars of Renaissance cities and bored soldiers who are still posted there to guard the Italian frontier ‘ (Muir, 2007, p.xxiii). Nicosia on the other hand, built like Zoebide, from conflicting colonialists’ and locals’ dreams has developed and grown. Perhaps what has remained most constant since its Venetian incarnation has been the vision of a geometrical city divided untidily by the old ghost of the river becoming first a boundary then a border.

For the academic Olga Demetriou, the border is a foundation, the Lacanian sinthome, and the boundary that marks the limits of Cypriot subjectivity.

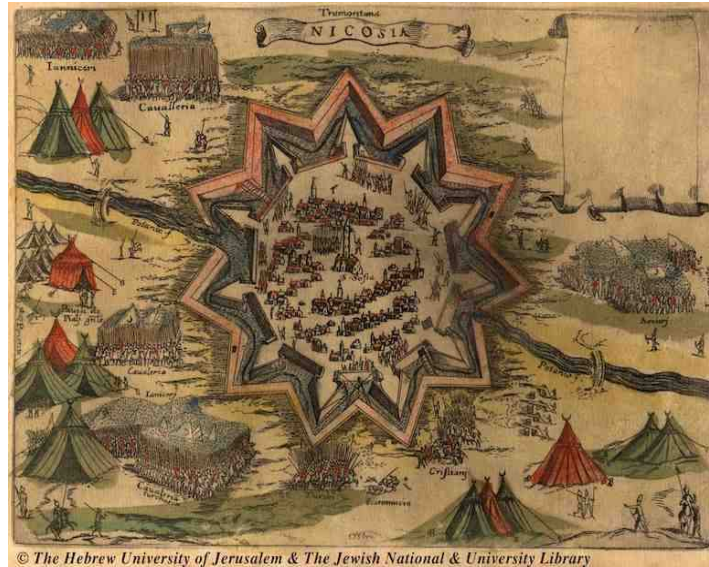


Figure 7. Map of Nicosia by Pinargenti 1573.

The Nicosian trap is a ‘discourse of victimization (which) leaves little room for agency and encloses the self in the center of attacking forces’ (Demetriou, 2007). And still new immigrant Others are being created, new strangers instituted so that a dyadic notion of Cypriot identity can be maintained. Nicosia hides everything it wants to forget in plain sight, at the very centre of the old walled city. The ground of my identity is a labyrinth of psychic and social borders: I am Ariadne, I am the maze, and I am the Minotaur. The Dead Zone is the very heart of my homeland.<sup>21</sup>

### The Border Dérive

Lefkosia’s Greek name makes her the city of the white goddess. Like the dreamers drawn to Zoebide I was drawn to the city I remembered from dreams.

<sup>21</sup> The interjection, or leakage of poetic language into a theoretical thesis here denotes a textual performance of the constant stranger, the one whose discourse both marks and challenges the boundary of belonging.

I conducted a series of *dérives* around the Green Line that divides Nicosia in August 2006, April 2009 and March 2010. For Debord the lesson drawn from *dérives*

Enable us to draw up the first surveys of the psychogeographical articulations of a modern city. Beyond the discovery of unities of ambiance, of their main components and their spatial localization, one comes to perceive their principal axes of passage, their exits and their defences. One arrives at the central hypothesis of the existence of psychogeographical pivotal points. One measures the distances that actually separate two regions of a city, distances that may have little relation with the physical distance between them. With the aid of old maps, aerial photographs and experimental *dérives*, one can draw up hitherto lacking maps of influences, maps whose inevitable imprecision at this early stage is no worse than that of the first navigational charts. The only difference is that it is no longer a matter of precisely delineating stable continents, but of changing architecture and urbanism (Debord, 1956/2004).

The physical border between north and south Nicosia is a palimpsest that traces the route of a diverted river, the Pedios, which ran through Nicosia until the Venetians diverted it in 1570 in anticipation of the Ottoman attack (Papadakis, 2006). The river became a commercial artery, where the different millets of Ottoman Cyprus met and traded on the shopping streets of the dried out riverbed; then it became a boundary, then a functional divide and a barricade - a physical partition, which then became concretised as a borderline. ‘One line etched by the natural course of water has governed social and political dynamics in Nicosia for centuries’ (Calame and Charlesworth, 2009, p.214). The series of photographic images I produced in order to explore my Turkish Cypriot identity arose out of a series of *dérives* (Debord, 1956) around the Green Line that divides Nicosia between 2006 and 2010. My creative strategy in producing the photographs, poems and prose was to inhabit a conceptual border space between the academic and the personal, to deploy a ‘layered account writing format as a postmodern reporting technique’ that enables me ‘to incorporate



multiple voices including theory, subjective experience, fantasy, and more to convey aspects of a topic at hand that would be otherwise excluded from a more traditional format' (Rambo, 2005, p.563).

Borders of memory, perception, interaction, as well as the hard borders of states are traversed. As Atun, Alpar and Doratli note,

The border itself can be accepted as an entity with elements of socialization, constituting the mechanisms through which difference is accepted and instead of prolonging the conflictual aspects, a co- existence is achieved ... like the historic walls which have now been assigned with a positive and identical meaning for both communities, the Buffer Zone, which is perceived as a 'wall of aggression', may become one of the biggest catalysts, as a dynamic border, for the future of the city (Atun, Alpar and Doratli, 2009).

The *dérive* offers the possibility of new perspectives through the juxtaposition of differing ways of seeing and understanding the territory, through walks where I documented the process through photographs, recorded sound, filmed and written notes. In this context photography is more important as a process rather than a product. The process of the *dérive* seeks to unfix the photograph's claim to freeze time, to act as discursive practice of cliché and evidentiary medium par excellence. However the regulatory, bureaucratic and aesthetic discursive regimes of photographic practice are still in play and can never entirely be expunged.

In addition to these walks I have made journeys through various unofficial archives, the PRIO storeroom,<sup>22</sup> my parents' photograph album, a family friend and

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<sup>22</sup> Founded in Norway in 1959, the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) is an independent research institution with two centres, the PRIO Cyprus Centre and the Centre for the Study of Civil War. The PRIO Cyprus Centre states that its mission is 'to contribute to an informed public debate on key issues relevant to an eventual settlement of the Cyprus problem. Its ambition is to achieve this through the establishment and dissemination of information and by offering new analysis, and through facilitating dialogue. The researchers attached to the Centre are both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots' (PRIO Cyprus Centre (Internet) available at <http://www.prio.no/Programmes/Programme/?x=14>). PRIO has a



keen amateur film-maker Ahmet Cem's films, Mehmet Şik's photographic studio work from the enclave years and the maps I collected and created of these *dérives*.<sup>23</sup> I developed palimpsests and collages of image and text that served as maps in preparation for and contemplation of my *dérives*.<sup>24</sup>

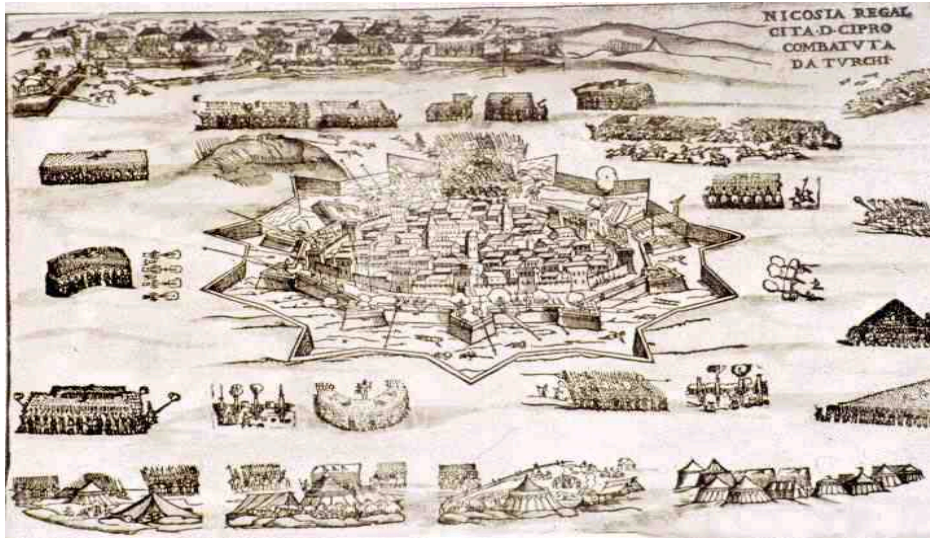


Figure 8. Map of Nicosia by Lasor A. Varea 1713

The value of these maps extends beyond their practical use in order to orientate oneself in both historical and present space. They also interrogate how that space is remembered and understood. Historical maps of the city, for instance Pinargenti's 1573 representation and Varea's 1713 three dimensional rendition show the Ottoman siege of the walled and moated Venetian city between July and October 1570. The Pedios, the river running through the city was dammed up during the conflict. It became the main boundary between the Ottoman conquerors who occupied the north of the city and the Cypriot Orthodox community who lived to the south of the former river. The phantom river, no longer visible to the eye, is forgotten but revived

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small store room in the UN controlled Ledra Palace Hotel which is now in the Dead Zone, the UN controlled no man's land between the Turkish controlled north and the Republic of Cyprus.

<sup>23</sup> Examples of these are documented at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/mapping>.

<sup>24</sup> Examples can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/topography-text>

on contemporary maps by the border.



Figure 9. Contemporary tourist map of Nicosia produced by the Republic of Cyprus 2009

Where early maps blend cartography and representative drawing, showing the Gothic Saint Sophia Cathedral (built over centuries years from 1209 during early Frankish rule and officially inaugurated, although not yet completed in 1326)<sup>25</sup> and indicating roughly other settlements, and people. The land outside the walls is wilderness or battleground until Giacomo Franco's map from 1597 shows farmland and orchards.<sup>26</sup> The emblem of the walled city persists on contemporary maps and in the emblem of the Turkish Cypriot municipality since it was established in 1958. The river and the walls are indirectly and explicitly memorialised in modern cartography, even when streets lose their names, as in the Republic's refusal to represent or remember the 'occupied zone' and the city's Turkish quarter, a part of its history since 1571.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See Dreghorn (1995) for a detailed history of the Cathedral and the medieval architecture of the Turkish quarter in Nicosia.

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/mapping>.

<sup>27</sup> 'After the Venetians were overthrown by the Ottomans in 1571, the city remained ensconced within these walls, with the newly settled Turkish population generally living in the north of the old riverbed, and the Greek population settling into the southern part. Other ethnic minority groups such as the Armenians and Latins came to be settled near the western entry into the city at Paphos Gate. While the last several decades have seen a lot of rhetoric about 'reunifying' the city, it is important to clarify that Nicosia has historically been divided into a Turkish north, and a Greek south. This division was

My studio practice developed through a series of relays between historical cartography, walking remembered routes and a psychogeographical attempt to map the self, situating myself in Freud's mirror and creating nonrepresentational maps through physical collages using photocopies, ink, acrylics and egg shell, building photographic sets and remediating found moments and images and juxtaposing these with traces from the artists' studio and x-rays in order to assert their cartographic nature as works towards a map of the self. These maps of the self arise chiefly out of the physicality of marking a territory, the terrain of childhood memory by repeatedly walking it, specifically of walking the Green Line.<sup>28</sup> The terrain that is claimed in this performance is the uncertain terrain of autobiographical memory and of history. The border between the past and the present is always evident in this region but pasts are telescoped and become confused, as the ruins of medieval walls mingle with more modern ruins like the Armenian Church destroyed in 1963 and the ruins around the Ledra Palace Hotel, created in 1974. I walked remembered routes, and also remembered routes as I walked them.<sup>29</sup>

Over the duration of the project I kept written and photographic journals. In

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largely the rule in Nicosia, with the exceptions being a Turkish enclave to the south, and one Greek enclave in the north. Greek Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, and mixed villages were scattered throughout the rest of Cyprus, both in the north as well as the south of the island. When the Ottomans arrived, they settled into the old Lusignan palace in the north of the city, which became their administrative centre, *saray*, and the north was settled mainly by Turkish settlers. The Greek Cypriots remained concentrated in the south, where the Archbishopric of the Orthodox Church was built. These two communities were divided by the riverbed of the Pedieos River, which had flowed through the center of the city until diverted by Venetians. Under the Ottomans this riverbed was open until covered over by the British for hygienic reasons. These riverbed streets formed the backbone of the east-west route through the city, connecting Paphos Gate in the west with Famagusta Gate to the east. It is along these streets that the Cypriots from both sides of the city historically came together, streets that contained a mixture of Greek, Turkish, and Armenian businesses. Incredibly enough, this historical urban topography has endured, with most of these riverbed streets falling within the Buffer Zone – radically transformed from spaces of cooperation to lines of division – partitioning the city from west to east.' (*Nicosia City Profile* Available at <http://www.conflictincities.org/Nicosia.html> )

<sup>28</sup> Examples of images from the border walks can be seen on *MemoryMap* at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/dream-white-goddess>, and at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/amnesia-and-ghosts-time-stopped-streets>.

<sup>29</sup> See above.

order to explore how to represent translocation I conducted dérives in Amsterdam, Athens, Berlin, Brussels, Bucharest, Havana, Istanbul, London, Prague, Shanghai and Vienna, exploring the literal and imaginative spaces of cities and interconnective memories. The trips to Havana and Vienna were both undertaken specifically for this research. I wanted to explore the similarities and differences between two very different cities Havana and Lefkoşa, both under decades of political embargo.<sup>30</sup> My trip to Vienna was to visit Freud's consulting room in Vienna, to place myself in his mirror, at the scene of *Screen Memories* and to suture myself into the text.<sup>31</sup>

### **Topoanalysis and Walking as Dreaming**

Walking is a way of investigating the ground underfoot but it also leads to new imaginative spaces through topoanalysis. Bachelard introduced his concept of topoanalysis in 'The Poetics of Space' (1964). Topoanalysis, the study of the affect of space proceeds through the systematic psychological studying of the sites of our intimate lives and our poetics arising from them. For Bachelard poetry is the direct product of the heart and soul. The poetic image precedes conscious thought and thus does not require knowledge. This direct relation of poetry to reality intensifies the reality of perceived objects as 'imagination augments the values of reality' (Bachelard, 1964,p.3). I conceptualised the project topoanalytically, that is poetically in terms of different imaginative spaces: *Hotel Amnesia*, the present moment of translocation at the cusp of remembering and forgetting which is governed by the cartography of drift; *the Dead Zone*, the uncanny home space of periphery; *the Ruined Cinema* that is the space of projection; and of different times: mythic time, the time of

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<sup>30</sup> See DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting* and <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/amnesia-and-ghosts-time-stopped-streets>.

<sup>31</sup> See <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/9-berggasse>

Orpheus and Eurydice in particular; memory time, that is autobiographical time (my childhood), historical/political time (the enclave years) and future time, of becoming. The image-voice pieces relating to these three imaginary spaces are contained on the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting: journeys in the dead zone*.

This spatial conceptualisation arose partly out my engagement with Bachelard's work. Bachelard develops the poetics of memory/reverie as method of enquiry and research in *The Poetics of Reverie* (1971). He argues that the resonances and reverberations arising of reverie, and 'the intermediary play between thought and reverie' are active modes of enquiry. Reverie 'is a psychological idealisation in depth. It is a product (*oeuvre*) of creating (*creante*) psychology. Reverie brings to light aesthetics of psychology. And the idealised being starts talking with the idealising being. He talks as function of his own duality' (Bachelard, 1971, p.8). Bachelard's is also a mobile methodology of memory, 'a sort of *interior transfer*, an *Uebertragung* which carries us beyond ourselves into another ourselves' (p.8). We travel through the interior space and time of our multiplied identity.

The space we experience is multiplied too. Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space offers us three spaces; a First Space of spatial practice, 'a realite quotidienne' and a Second Space of conceived space (as organised by architecture, photography, film). Both exist within and simultaneously with the Third Space of lived situations. This space 'may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic' (Lefebvre, 1991, p.42). The *dérive* exists within and seeks to represent this space. Lefebvre's Third Space offers a 'rapprochement' between the different spaces that exist, such as physical space, mental space and social space and in its potential for agency and transformation relates closely to Winnicott's haptic space of play (Winnicott, 2005). Play, reverie and through them

the popular cultural aesthetics of cinema, pop culture from the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly relating to Barbie and the View Master were central modes for my visual and performative enquiries into the interface between collective and individual memory.<sup>32</sup>

The memories and spaces summoned by the topoanalysis are fluid and personal, but they are nevertheless governed by regulatory and collective mediations. Thus the *dérive* takes history, memory and poetry for a walk. I further investigated memory practice developed through the drift by revisiting, reconstituting and working from family photographs and souvenirs. This led to the creation of *Hotel Amnesia* as a reconstituted no-place of private memory practice in a series of texts and images. The creation of an archive of real and imaginary objects, and of a literal mapping, through the assemblage and psychogeography of the ‘third space’ of a deterritorialised poetics was central to my studio practice. Film and photographs of the border walk, and of my ‘fugitive itineraries’ my resistance to the literal territorialisation of practice, led to the slide show presentation *the cartography of drift* that was presented at an event at the Mitre in Greenwich in 2008.<sup>33</sup>

In *Transmitting Culture* (2000) the philosopher and activist Régis Debray explores the spaces between and the indivisibility of transmission and the technologies of transmission. He articulates and explores the double nature of memory as a medium itself and its transformative capacities in its mediated variants – the voice, the text, the image, and the space that contains and represents it. ‘Just as there can be no cultural transmission without technological means, so is there no purely technological transmission’ (Debray, 2000, p.12). The Church, Cinema and

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<sup>32</sup> Images relating to play as part of the creative process can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/archive-lost-object> and at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/what-did-it-mean-other-world>.

<sup>33</sup> Elements of that presentation can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/cartography-drift>.



Theatre, all denote both the physical site (technology) and the rituals and practices (transmission), illustrating how technology and transmission are indivisible in the articulation of those institutions. Nora's place of memory becomes a contested and shifting territory through competing transmissions of collective reminiscence. For Debray the mediation of memory claims that territory. 'Transmitting means organising; thus it stakes out territory. It consolidates a whole, draws borderlines, defends itself, and exiles others' (Debray, 2000, p.15). Thus the border is a ruin that can be read as simultaneously abject, aestheticized and nostalgic. The dead zone is both a ruined space (of failed memory) and a physical milieu de memoire that refuses forgetting but also refuses any single dominant meaning. It is, and represents, the zone of contestation. Old identities are both underscored and undermined here. As the philosopher and psychoanalyst Felix Guattari reminds us 'individuation certainly survives, but is wrought by collective assemblages of enunciation' (Guattari, 1995, p.8).

It's a question of being aware of machines of subjectivation which don't simply work 'the faculties of the soul', inter-personal relations or intra-familial complexes. Subjectivity does not only produce itself through the psychogenetic stages of psychoanalysis or the 'mathemes' of the Unconscious, but also in the large-scale social machines of language and the mass media – which cannot be described as human (Guattari, 1995, p.9).

Guattari goes on to observe

Every individual and social group conveys its own system of modelling subjectivity; that is a certain cartography – composed of cognitive references as well as mythical, ritual and symptomatological references – with which it positions itself in relation to its affects and anguishes, and attempts to manage its inhibitions and drives (Guattari, 1995, p.11).

My aim was to photograph the spaces as autobiographical milieu de memoire and not

to actively seek the inhabitants of the zone; those that I photographed initiated contact and engaged me in conversation or invited the camera's gaze.

### **Autobiographical Archaeologies**

My walks were circular, revisiting spaces, walking the same small constellation of streets repeatedly, and photographing the same buildings or graffiti on many occasions. The point of the *dérives* was to unpick that repetition, to sift it for differences, for the possibility of change, in ways of seeing, being and de-territorializing the memory that mediates and premeditates the image. This is a site that deconstructs the sight of myths, the unbearable and contradictory sutures and elisions of autobiographical memory. The process of photography is a form of note taking, following the eye, mapping memory, an archaeology using poetry, autobiographical memory and history. The hard border is actualized by soft boundaries, not just of memory, but also of the rupture and suture between religions and politically constructed values. This autobiographical archaeology, tracing the repetitions and precursors of the borders and dead zones in Cypriot memory through the layered refractions of writing, enables me to discern both the longevity of these borders, markers of difference and also their myriad kaleidoscope of translations between cultures. Many meanings are lost in the process.

The first loss is linguistic; an undeciphered original Cypriot alphabet, which blends linear Aegean and near eastern cuneiform writing styles,<sup>34</sup> an original language that still leaves its trace in the accents of all Cypriots, in the forgotten literatures of Greek written in Ottoman script and Turkish in the Cyrillic alphabet. The lost Cypriot language still haunt the island's memory, through the touristic everyday to the mythic,

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<sup>34</sup> See introductory notes by the curator Sophocles Hadjisavvas to the exhibition *Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilisation* at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.



a language that would have spoken of Aphrodite, and her darker precursors, Cybele and Astarte (Millot, 1990, p.75). The mythic dominates: the myth of what constitutes the ‘Cyprus problem’, the beginning of the narrative, the myths that constitute national and gender identity and is thus key to my *dérives*. Myths are profoundly political. The eternal return of a ‘Solution’ must surely reside in that which has been forgotten, sutured. The ground of Cypriot identity is in myth.

Aphrodite’s birth offers the unitary boundary of classical myth, *ethnos* and destiny, through indigeneity. Yet Aphrodite operated under different names before she became a Hellene. The blonde Botticelli beauty who decorates boxes of ‘Cyprus Delight’ is a polymorphously perverse goddess. An immigrant from Babylon, the Great Mother is incestuous, a goddess of war, mother to *Phobos*, terror, and *Deimos*, fear, as well as *Eros*. She is mother to the priapic, and hermaphroditic. Her priests are self-castrators. The screen memory of the blonde, depilated vision of Aphrodite as a European lovely seeks to erase a space of beginning and becoming where the patriarchal heterosexist discourses dominant in both contemporary communities are not evident at all. The mythic does not provide a secure static original narrative, mythic as well as tectonic plates shift here, and this is an earthquake zone. When we trace the genealogy of our myths they lead us to multiplicity, the Cyprus of the Ten Kingdoms lasted for a thousand years, they lead us back to difference rather than purity. Difference constitutes continuity, ‘what matters is folding, unfolding, refolding’ (Deleuze, 1993, p.137).

The Greek and Turkish nationalisms that claimed and shaped Cypriot communities in the twentieth century are themselves still haunted by their cultural contiguities, deep connections and longings as well as on-going hostilities. The historian Bruce Clark reminds us of the complex affinities as well as enmities

between Greek and Turkish cultures.

Mingled with the memories of terror and betrayal, feelings and recollections persisted which somehow transcended the Greek-Turkish divide; personal friendships, commercial partnerships, a sense of common participation in a single world, constituted by landscape, music, food and all the trivia of everyday life. .... It is above all in the world of culture - novels, films and songs - that the two peoples have felt free to express the depth of their commonality. (Clark, 2006, p.10)

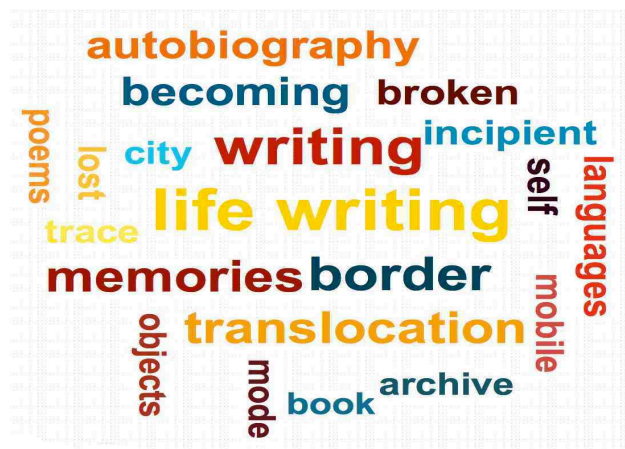
The local differences Cypriots ascribe to each other are shored up and undermined by their complex global and 'motherland' Greek and Turkish cultural allegiances and enmities and the added complexities of a postcolonial relationship to Britain. The passion, interconnectedness and ambivalence which is the ground of Greco-Turkish Cypriot cultural identity is a dynamic possibility, grows out of the everyday, out of the possibilities of permeability that Cypriots make of the border as a space of flow.

Embracing change and mobility and rejecting isolationist nostalgia does not imply that we must insist on forgetting the past, but rather involves thinking carefully, and creatively about what and how we remember. If Cypriotness is to move beyond a memory or fantasy of Cyprus before its division in 1963 and to accommodate an understanding of the island's culture in relation to changing geopolitical realities, then it will have to include its new strangers who are the result of new global flows of migration rather than seeing this flux and international mobility as a problem, as so many Cypriots do. The architectural theorist Anita Bakshi (2008) looks forward to conceptualising how we might commemorate the Dead Zone once it is no longer a border. Bakshi explores the options and possibilities of memorialisation and commercialisation and recommends that when the time comes and the border no longer functions, we let a trace remain, make it both permeable and palpable, so that

we can celebrate movement across boundaries, without forgetting that they exist; so that we can accommodate and acknowledge the ruins of the past within the present, without refortifying them in the future.

In conclusion in this chapter I have introduced and contextualised my creative research and described how transposing the *dérive* from western Europe to Nicosia and using it as an auto-ethnographic strategy has enabled me to traverse and map real and metaphorical borders of a Cypriot imaginary. This develops through a process of literally walking the space of childhood and imaginatively traversing mythic, militarised, politicised, commercialised and imaginary spaces of my own recollection and devising. Memory is multiplied both through its doubled nature, poetic practice, the drift itself and given mutable form and meanings through the profusion of all its mediated configurations. The *dérive* is conceptualised as an operation in a Lefebvrian understanding of space, as a spatial practice that traverses conceived space, from the tourist map to its mythic dimension in order to produce a fluid and dynamic ‘lived situation’ of Third Space. In the next chapter I will explore the work of authors whose autobiographically inflected literature has been a key influence on, or provides a useful perspective for, the writing arising out of my *dérives*. Selected texts and images, collated as a book *The Archive of Lost Objects*, are discussed in relation to a proposed field of expanded life writing.

## Chapter 2: *The Archive of Lost Objects* as Life Writing



### Translocated Writing

In the last chapter I outlined how the aim of my practice is to research memory through the autoethnographic practice of a series of *dérives* using routes from my memories of early childhood in the Turkish Cypriot enclave of Nicosia in Cyprus 1967-74. Having outlined how I began by collating an archive of memories, in this chapter I discuss the autobiographical practice of writers whose work has been significant for my literary research into memory in order to delineate my field of practice and map a practice-based literature review. This enables me to locate and explain my practice, in particular the book *The Archive of Lost Objects* in relation to the field of life writing.

The form of my research, as well as its content, proceeds by investigating borders and zones of contestation. Aesthetic and disciplinary borders and canons are traversed in addition to geographical and political boundaries. My practice does not sit tidily in conventional categories and disciplines of art and academic practice but crosses between the borders of literature and autobiographical writing, visual art practice, performance, anthropology and philosophy. The fields of practice relevant

for this research encompass life writing (Moore-Gilbert, 2009) as well as art practice. The experience of movement, both as diaspora, emigration and exile and of moving between conceptual spaces and media, of being a stranger in either or multiple places is common for the writers working at the cusp of autobiography on whom I focus, Jamal Mahjoub, Aamer Hussein, Emine Sevgi Ozdamar, and Orhan Pamuk. I deploy the term translocation to describe this engagement with movement across space, time and media, in the form and content of the work because translocation does not contain the culturally charged terms, which prioritise geographical shifts, such as emigration and diaspora. Here the concept of translocation is deployed to include memory shifts, geographical movement, movement across media and movement as theme.

The book of poems and prose pieces with black and white photographs *The Archive of Lost Objects* arose out of my psychogeographic dérives and the textual, photographic and film recordings I made of the process. For the duration of the project from 2006- 2012 I documented elements of both my everyday life, as well as the dérives I undertook explicitly for this project, in approximately 10,000 photographs and twelve notebooks of poetry and text fragments, in order to explore the relation between memory, writing and photography, and to explore the creative interstices of language (specifically poetic writing) and image. I compiled archives of the process of creative investigation both digitally, on the *MemoryMap* website and in the form of a book, *The Archive of Lost Objects*, a collection of poems, exploring memory and time, including a fugitive itinerary of cafe poems from Prague, Istanbul, New York, Paris, Bombay, Los Angeles and London which circle and return to childhood memories of Cyprus. The ghosts and voices of Ballard, Borges, Deleuze, Derrida, Eliot, Rossetti, Orpheus and Eurydice haunt this archive of memory traces. The book replicates elements of my notebooks, of the process of making and working

through memory; poems are interspersed with black and white photographs, and prose fragments on myth, memory and literature. I created a series of photo essays, text and image pieces, where the text and image are in creative tension, the image does not illustrate the text, the text does not explain the image.

## **Life Writing**

In order to better understand the translocatory move between fact, fiction and philosophy that is made in my writing it is necessary to situate it in relation to life writing. The genre of life writing encompasses many autobiographical literatures ranging from the autobiography, the biography, the memoir, the hagiography, travel writing, the roman a clef to the essay, and ranges in literary discourse from the political to the personal, and the literary to the low brow. Even the most canonical and conventionally Occidentalist overview of the field of autobiographical writing reveals it to be an interstitial site of writing where the self moves between the acts of multiplication, interpretation and narration, and is thus never a stable and entirely coherent entity. The field has been a rich source of phenomenological writing from the mystical ecstasies of the first autobiography in English, dictated by the illiterate would-be saint Margery Kempe in the late 1430s to Montaigne's intimate and scholarly essays (literally 'attempts') in 1575 and Proust's more aristocratic and melancholic sacrifice of life in order to record and remember living. The Cartesian *Cogito*, the cornerstone of the Enlightenment creation of the modern self, is itself an autobiographical construct, born out of the act of thinking about the self. Nevertheless the literary theorist Moore-Gilbert (2009) shows how those peripheral to Occidental centres, norms and values are made invisible in conventional studies of autobiography as genre.

Moore-Gilbert deploys the term ‘life writing’ to describe work that is ‘autobiographical without necessarily observing the classical rules of the genre’ (Moore-Gilbert, 2009, p.131). He asserts that the genre is of particular importance in the study of postcolonial and culturally peripheral contexts as it reveals new texts and perspectives that challenge the canonical and academic orthodoxies and subjectivities in conventional and canonical auto/biographical studies, which continues to give limited space to writers outside the western canon. Life writing gives voice to different forms of becoming, that reject models of ‘sovereign, centred, unified Selfhood’ (Moore-Gilbert, 2009, p.xviii) and which explore the site specificity of identity, its cosmopolitan and diasporic flux. Sara Suleri’s *Meatless Days* (1989), Edward Said’s *Out of Place* (1990), and Hanif Kureishi’s *My Ear at his Heart* (2005) are all examples of complex memoirs that explore the family, its romances and dramas through the prism of often competing and mutually incompatible expectations borne out of their hybrid identities. The larger political and cultural issues raised by the world outside, and by the politics and poetics of postcolonialism, begin at home. Moore-Gilbert identifies blurring the boundaries between memoir and fiction as a key feature of postcolonial life writing (Moore-Gilbert, 2009, p.69).

### **Mobile Memories**

Aamer Hussein and Jamal Mahjoub are both writers who create fictional alter egos and fictionalise their lives, creating a dialogue between their narrating self and fictive self in order to explore the sense of being exiled from cultural certainty and centrality in their ambiguous positions as cosmopolitan émigrés. Both these writers provide important comparisons in terms of bilingual and postcolonial writing. These are travelling fictions. Hussein’s short stories span continents, decades and social

classes, moving between a London of book launches at the Parrot Club, walks in Hyde Park, Indonesian noodle bars and cappuccinos in Maida Vale; Karachi, Hong Kong and East Africa. In other stories and other collections his work also takes us to Rome, Andalusia, India and Indonesia.

In Mahjoub's *Traveling with Djinnns*, Yasin Zahir, of mixed Sudanese and British parentage, brought up in Sudan and now (un) settled in Britain, negotiates the complexity of his cultural heritage and his place in a Europe to which he is intimately connected both by blood and education and his sense that he cannot be fully accepted anywhere. In both these writers' works identity is predicated on movement rather than stasis or a sense of geographic belonging. There is a sense of moving, of a privileged nomadism. Home for Yasin in *Traveling with Djinnns* is the big bag of books he's been carting across continents since adolescence. Home is essentially a bibliography; from Ibn Arabi to Basho (via 1970s Hong Kong Kung Fu films), Brecht, Bellow, Baldwin, Benjamin, Dickens, and Dumas - the list is long and various. Hussein and Mahjoub were both educated within an English colonial syllabus. The European literary canon is part of their cultural landscape and integral to their intellectual identities. It is not a cultural lack that marks them as outsiders, rather a surfeit, their knowledge of an Other culture, and a too-thorough knowledge of European culture. Postcolonial literature is often marked by the contingency and marginality of characters, they're often exiles and migrants. Mahjoub's protagonist Yasin does not celebrate his postcolonial identity. Rather, he envies 'writers who have a language and a history that is granted them with no catches, no hooks.' (Mahjoub, 2003 p.4) Whilst he is repelled by and rejects his sister Yasmina's easy and wholesale embracing of a dour Islamic fundamentalist feminism, and harbours a nostalgia for the cultured anti-colonialism of his father's generation, he is politically apathetic and impotent.



In the short story *Skies in This Other Salt* Hussein weaves a narrative braided out of the intersections and disjunctures not just between Pakistani and British literary culture but also between dreams, letters, newspaper articles and a realist narrative somewhere between autobiography and fiction. Sameer, Hussein's autobiographical alter ego, gives a lecture on his return to Karachi after decades in Europe. He describes his intercultural identity in relation to writing. As migrants, he says

Our continuities are shattered and even words play games with each other as memories suffer the distortions of other languages ...I read the world from right to left, though I find it hard sometimes to decipher the right-to-left passages of my mother tongue. But a web of Arabic letters, in invisible ink, underlines my sentences, forms a palimpsest, crosses and mutilates the words I write. Sometimes I feel I write English from right to left (Hussein, 1993 p.106).

Yet Hussein isn't contented with this eloquent expression of a transcultural intellectual identity. Sameer is challenged by a local communist and his lecture is dismissed as 'chic expatriate nonsense' (Hussein, 1993 p.106).

Hussein uses the short story form to explore identity. Whilst there is an autobiographical thread of 'Sameer' stories, there are multiple identities, stories and ways of telling them, from the mythic, the folkloric, and the biographical to naturalism. All the stories have other stories and ways of telling embedded in them and often the narrative actually turns on the contrasting texture of differing discourses. In *Skies* (Hussein, 1999) Hussein uses a multiplicity of discourses and stories to explore alter ego Sameer's syncretic cultural identity. The postmodern literary techniques he uses are not merely 'technique' they are the body of the syncretic identity in the interstices of competing ideologies. The narrative demands that the novel makes in terms of a coherent central subjectivity and trajectory highlight how problematic interstitial cultural identity is for Yasin (Mahjoub's

autobiographical alter-ego) both formally and thematically. The ‘problem’ of a lack of a single univocal cultural identity and allegiance is more formally problematic in the novel, which seeks to unify than in Hussein’s use of postmodern aesthetic strategies and the short story. The process of life writing reveals identity to be as much of an assemblage as the finished work itself.<sup>35</sup>

### **Becoming Autobiography**

My decision to use poetry to produce an autobiography entitled *The Archive of Lost Objects* is part of a conscious decision to disrupt the narrative flight to unification and the production of a chronological and consequential arc that delivers closure, through fragmentary forms of writing that incorporate different kinds of voices and modes of address in an evocation, though not a reproduction, of the notebooks I kept as part of my drifting process. *The Archive of Lost Objects* is a becoming-autobiography. Rather than narrativising memory the collection fragments any narrative trajectory and refuses particularity. There are poems which are evocations of memory, *Memory of my Childhood Bedroom* (p.16), *Stopped Clock* (p.34), and *What My Mother Bequeathed Me* (p.66) for instance; but there are poems which reflect on memory as well as summon it up like *The Pergamon Museum* (p.11), *A Gallery Exhibit: Beuys* (p.14), *Something to do with the Colour Yellow* (p.68), and *The Names of all her Dolls* (p.99). Thus it is not so much the memory, but the act of remembering which is archived. The fragments in the ‘lost’ archive, are dispersed

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<sup>35</sup> Deleuze and Guattari define an assemblage thus: ‘In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or, on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity—but we don’t know yet what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed, that is, after it has been elevated to the status of the substantive. ... Literature is an assemblage. It has nothing to do with ideology. There is no ideology and never has been.’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988,p.3-4).

across the web, DVD and book, and serve as screen memories, as banal fragments that assert a visual insistence through repetition, transposition and translation, relaying and echoing between image, text, voice and film. Like our earliest memories many of the poems are sensorial and fragmentary; others, like the self who remembers, are reflective and analytical. My poem *Something to Do with the Colour Yellow* (p.68) explores this refusal of coherence and autobiographical narrative closure through a metaphorical connection between telling oneself and Penelope weaving and then unravelling a mourning shroud for Odysseus in order to ward off her suitors.

Like Mahjoub's life writing mine too is rich with diverse cultural references, to Hellenic myth, from high culture to the everyday, the evening news (p.28), the 1970s genre science fiction film *Logan's Run* (p.106) and home movies (p.36). As in Mahjoub's novel there is compelling sense here in which it is these eclectic cultural maps rather than any specific geographic location that orientate identity and provide a sense of home, that home is a bibliography rather than a place. The poem *Transient Theme* (p.77) celebrates this mobile and transient identity.

My story *A Minute Taker at the Conference of Birds* (p.149) is directly inspired by Hussein's writing and by the delicate Sufi sensibility that underpins both his allegorical and more naturalistic stories. My story is an allegorical and autobiographical interaction with *The Conference of Birds*, a classic of Sufi literature by the Persian poet Farid al-Din Attar written in 1177.<sup>36</sup> My father had recounted extracts from the work to me as a child and I had always associated the mythical lake with the Salt Lake at Larnaca, which is the site of an important Moslem holy shrine,

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<sup>36</sup> This extended book of verse tells the story of a diverse group of birds that undertake a long and arduous journey to find the great Simorgh, a mythical bird. The poems are highly symbolised and frequently didactic. At the end of the journey the birds find only a lake and their own reflection therein. The Sufi message of the poem is that the Simorgh, and God, are a reflection of the totality of existence.

the Hala Sultan Tekke.<sup>37</sup> The piece represented a journey both towards the site of childhood, memories of the Salt Lake, my father reciting poetry, the fairy story; and a conversation with another writer about spirituality. As well as a literal, geographical drift through space there is a sense of moving backwards and forwards through time in the nine fragments of prose memoir<sup>38</sup> that are interspersed throughout *The Archive of Lost Objects*. The book also contains a series of seven short reflections on the birth and death of the novel as a literary form interspersed chronologically throughout the book<sup>39</sup> that mark the work's desire to denaturalise the medium of transmission at every turn, making this a becoming not-novel, not straightforwardly or purely a flight into the poetic.

My work is also marked by linguistic shifts at the boundaries between different voices and modes of address. My mother tongue is English and it is my dominant language now, but it was not my first language. My first language was Turkish. Until the age of five, my mother informed me, I would translate the bedtime story she had read me in English into Turkish for my dolls after she had left the room. My Turkish has atrophied somewhat, is now a 'kitchen language', although I regularly read poetry in Turkish. Turkish feeds and informs my writing in English. Emine Sevgi Ozdamar's autobiographical writing, and reflections on linguistic and performative translation have been invaluable for thinking about how to represent the self in translation, in the company of the ghosts of other languages.

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<sup>37</sup> The Tekke (a building designed specifically for Sufi gatherings) is reputedly built on the site where Hala Sultan, the Prophet's wet nurse, died between 647-649, during the Arab Caliphate's raid on the island at that time (Boyle 1997). The Mosque and Tekke are within territory of the Republic of Cyprus. The Salt Lake and surrounding area was Turkish Cypriot *vakif* (held in trust) land that was reappropriated by the Republic and became the site of the new airport, the original airport remaining in no man's land controlled by the UN.

<sup>38</sup> *Hotel Amnesia* (The Archive of Lost Objects, p.27), *Stopped Clock* (p.34), *My Favourite Dream* (p.56), *Thinking on Foot* (p.61), *Zoebide in Nicosia* (p.64), *Photograph* (p.74), *Memory and the Impossibility of Fidelity* (p.80), *A Small Forgotten War* (p.82) and *Darker* (p.101).

<sup>39</sup> *Ear to Mouth* (p.22), *The Letter* (p.38), *The Novel and its Duty* (p.69), *The Murder of Gods* (p.87), *The Crystal Image of Time* (p.96), *The Author Disappears into the Novel* (p.100), *The Stream Becomes a Hall of Mirrors* (p.111)

## **Broken and Incipient Languages**

Like Hussein and Mahjoub, Ozdamar's writing inhabits the border zone between fiction and memoir. Ozdamar published her first book of short stories in German, in 1990. This was followed by her autobiographical trilogy *Life is a Caravanserai* (1992), *The Bridge of the Golden Horn* (1998) and *The Yard in the Mirror* (2001). Her writing, like her acting and directorial work in the theatre is strongly influenced by Brecht. She is not afraid to be in turn theoretically bold whilst also using humour and popular culture to make the familiar strange. In her writing Ozdamar creates an identity that begins in Turkish and becomes in a different tongue, a bold, re-forged and enriched German, which is accessible, entertaining and intellectually challenging. In her autobiographical trilogy her protagonist alter-ego Sevgi's peripatetic trajectory and various incarnations as an immigrant factory worker, language student and chambermaid in Berlin then as a drama student and actress in Turkey, challenge the tired stereotypes that haunt too many literary representations of migration. Ozdamar has a Dickensian talent for creating vivid portraits of ordinary people as complex, eccentric and utterly individual. The immigrants we meet are not simply pitiable victims of political and economic circumstance. They include an opera singer and a secret policewoman both fleeing unhappy love affairs, a girl saving up for a breast reduction operation, a lesbian couple and an engineering student who quotes Baudelaire. Vasif, the Communist warden at the hostel in Berlin and later a director at the Ankara Ensemble, and Madame Gutsio, an exile from the Fascist dictatorship in Greece, feed the teenager's prodigious intellectual curiosity and appetite for the theatre, film, politics and literature, introducing her to Kafka and Camus, Eisenstein and Godard, and to Brecht and the theatre in East Berlin.

For Ozdamar identity seems multiplied and enriched rather than compromised by translocation. Sevgi's mother remarks, 'a language is like a person, two languages are like two people.' Her father observes that she left Istanbul as a (Turkish) nightingale and returns as a (German) parrot, but this isn't quite right. The protagonist throws herself into her various incarnations as factory worker, political activist, method actor and intellectual with a comic energy and aplomb that is often parodic – dressing in black like Anna Magnani and shopping for a Mao jacket like Brigitte Bardot's in order to impress her revolutionary film-maker lover with her 'consciousness' for instance. Yet her observations transcend and subvert rather than reproduce the roles she inhabits. The novels evoke the surreal juxtapositions of politics and celebrity of their era. In *Bridge of the Golden Horn* Gina Lollobrigida's flower strewn car interrupts a left-wing demonstration in the driving Istanbul rain, the students on their road-trip chance upon Pasolini and Callas filming Medea in Cappadocia. Newspaper headlines punctuate the novel's quotidian realities and mark the passing of political icons, of Che, Martin Luther King, Franco; but they also provide a crazed Brechtian chorus highlighting the absurdity of the media: 'looking costs more', 'the revolt of the neurotics', 'baby died twice'. Ozdamar reminds us that literature is a transforming energy at the heart of life.

Poverty ran in the streets, and the people who in their lives had wanted to do something about it and had been killed as a result now lay down in the street as books. One only had to bend down to them, buy them, and hence many of those who had been killed entered homes, gathered on the bookshelves next to the pillows and lived in the houses. The people who shut and opened their eyes with these books went out into the streets again in the morning as Lorca, Sacco and Vanzetti, Robespierre, Danton, Nazim Hikmet, Pir Sultan Abdal, Rosa Luxemburg' (Ozdamar, 2007, p.177).

Her writing is an act of literary transubstantiation between languages and between the vivid flux and intensity of lived experience and language.

Martin Chalmers' English translation of *The Bridge of the Golden Horn* from the German retains the rich strangeness of her writing, in all its demotic and lyrical, ribald and romantic variety. Ozdamar's writing is subversively literal, when Turkish adjectives transposed to German they attain a political and poetic force through distanciation. The 'diamond' of virginity becomes a dubious wealth the protagonist is keen to be rid of rather than hoard, so that she can be free to 'pursue the beauty of men'. The unremarkable urban ruin the factory girls skulk around after work becomes the 'offended' station, the locus of homesickness. Cultural ignorance too is used to make a political point as much as for comic effect. The intellectuals at the Turkish Worker's Association speak so often of Nietzsche that the factory girls presume he is the German prime minister. Ozdamar's writing is often on the cusp of poetry. My poem *On the Bridge Across the Golden Horn* (*The Archive of Lost Objects* p.71) quotes and paraphrases moments from her work of the same name in order to highlight the surrealism, acuity and beauty of her writing. Where her work inhabits the interstices of the memoir and the novel Pamuk's work is often on the cusp of the essay and the memoir.

### **The Self and the City**

Orhan Pamuk's autobiographical writing also spatialises itself, and takes a city as its focus, although in contrast to Ozdamar's, his writing tends towards a more aristocratic nostalgia for the glories of the multicultural Ottoman past of the city. Part memoir, part cultural history, Pamuk presents a vision of his home city that is occluded by the mists of reminiscence. His work spans the literary and the scholarly

with ease. He tries to make sense of the contested representations of European travellers and Turkish writers, the changing fortunes of Istanbul, and his own place within it. Pamuk is drawn to the blackened ruins of old wooden mansions, the dark back streets and the conflagration of burning ships on the Bosphorous. He doesn't like 'afternoons in spring when the sun suddenly comes out full strength' (Pamuk, 2005, p.318). As in Calvino's imaginary city, Zemrude, it is the mood of the beholder that gives the city its form (Calvino, 1979). For Pamuk, 'anything we can say about the city's essence, says more about our own lives and our own states of mind. The city has no centre other than ourselves' (Pamuk, 2005, p.349).

Pamuk's state of mind in this autobiographical reverie is suffused with melancholy or, to give the emotion its distinctly Turkish inflection: *hüzün*. *Hüzün* is an ambiguous term similar to Aristotelian melancholy, and to the gentler Romantic fetishisation of ruin and solitude. As the Islamic incarnation of that emotion, the term also implies a state of grace, a collective yearning for the divine and the bittersweet recognition of spiritual lack. Both sublime and profane, it can be found in Sufism, in the crass melodramas that Turkish cinema churned out in the 1960s and 1970s, and in the fatalistic 'arabesk' pop spilling out of back-street cafés. The private melancholy of his parents' failed marriage and the public, communal, end-of-Empire desolation that pervaded Istanbul in the mid 20th-century are explored through Pamuk's recollections of childhood. His fascinating account of European visions of the city moves from Flaubert, Nerval and Gautier through Gide to Brodsky; and the work of native Istanbul residents like the novelist Tanpınar and poet Yahya Kemal.

*Istanbul: Memories and the City* (2005) is accompanied by an abundance of illustrations and photographs from the 1950s to the present including images from the writer's family album and the work of the Armenian Istanbul photographer, Ara



Güler. As with Sebald's *The Emigrants* (1993) these images are small, black and white, affectless and under emphatic. Rather than serving a traditional illustrative purpose they serve an allusive function, as fragments of a lost archive, of evidentiary material that spans personal and official archives. Güler's black and white images record Istanbul from shortly before the departure of most of Istanbul's Greek population in 1955 to the present,<sup>40</sup> that event being one that haunts Pamuk's memoir.

The blend of eastern and western cultures, so characteristic of Istanbul, is something Pamuk explores with mixed feelings. Encouraged by Atatürk's Republic to identify with Europe (although Ottoman cultural ties with Europe, and France in particular, predate Atatürk's project by centuries), Turks inhabit a space that is both East and West; and also a space between that is neither one thing nor the other. The Ottoman past is, literally, a foreign country for the Turks. Pamuk mourns the replacement of the Empire with 'the little, imitative republic of Turkey' and the descent of 'the grand polyglot, multicultural Istanbul of the imperial age' into 'a monotonous, monolingual town in black and white' (Pamuk, 2005, p.238).

Ironically, Pamuk is most western when he nostalgically decries the ersatz European culture of contemporary Turks, haunted by the chimerical vision of an 'authentic' eastern identity - whatever that might be. For Pamuk, as for most westerners, the only 'East' he can discern is shabby poverty and he has, if not a revulsion towards the poor, then a fear of them and their devotion to religion.

While this is a memoir it also allows us to discern where fact and fiction meet: the eccentric popular historians and columnists, the apartment block built to house an extended family, the writer as lonely flâneur: all will be familiar themes to readers of

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<sup>40</sup> The Istanbul Riots of 1955 were a state organized mob attacks on the Greek population of Istanbul. Demonstrations protesting intercommunal conflict in Cyprus on the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 1955 became a Government orchestrated mob riot that led to a violent attack on the Greek population of Istanbul (Alexandris, 1983). Over a dozen people died, much property was destroyed and most Greek families fled. The Greek population decreased from 65,108 to 49,081 between 1955 and 1960 (Tsilenis).

his novels, particularly *The Black Book*, who may also be familiar with Pamuk's engagement with Flaubert to readers of *The White Castle*. Pamuk is as revelatory about the processes of memory and everyday life in his essays as he is in his 'memoir of the city'. In *Other Colours* (Pamuk, 2007) Pamuk explores the private reveries that inspire his writing and provides a glimpse into the incidental intimacies of the writer's personal life. Modestly quotidian but elusive moments, from the happiness of sharing a horse and carriage ride and going to the beach with his small daughter to the uncanny sense of inanimate objects having intense affectivities in the small insomniac hours of the morning or giving up smoking are beautifully evoked.

In his observations on barbers, street food and family discussions of Europe over liqueurs Pamuk interweaves personal reminiscence and cultural history, a literary strategy he employs in *Istanbul*, shifting from a long discursive historical perspective to moments of autobiographical complicity. He is sometimes comic in the face of disaster, when all of Istanbul is gripped by anxiety after the earthquakes in 1999 he constructs a shelter under his desk using old encyclopaedias and calculates the likely gradient should the minarets outside his study topple over onto his apartment building. Pamuk can't imagine living anywhere else despite the now terrifying inevitability of another earthquake in his lifetime and it is this devotion to the city, and to its contingent frailties and decay, that marks him out as a quintessentially Romantic writer, drawn to ruined splendour.<sup>41</sup> 'The city's collective memory is its soul, and its ruins are its most eloquent testimony' (Pamuk, 2007, p.81).

Many critics identify nostalgia in Pamuk's vision of Istanbul (Afridi, 2012). Despite accusations of Romanticism Pamuk's ability to weave the intimacies of the

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<sup>41</sup> The art historian Christopher Woodward's (2001) analysis of the place of the ruin in the Romantic era and after *In Ruins* provides a useful framework within which to consider Pamuk's fascination with decay.

close-up gaze of the memoir with a more distanced scholarly perspective provides us with both the genealogies and poetry of the ephemeral and everyday. His writing serves as a reference point and inspiration, giving me the latitude to include notebook fragments in a more theoretical voice, that investigate the self through philosophical reflection,<sup>42</sup> as well as more straightforwardly literary and poetic expression.

### **Translocation and Life Writing**

Translocation is central to the form and content of all these authors, a sense of both moving away and towards places and times, or of being peripheral to both. Both distanciation as a Brechtian formal strategy (Ozdamar) and distance: moving between past and present moments (Hussein, Mahjoub, Pamuk), and the imaginary East and West (Pamuk, Mahjoub) and between language and the sensory (Ozdamar, Hussein). In his *First Diasporist Manifesto* (1989) Kitaj characterises painting, which engages with translocation as ‘diasporist painting’, and states that ‘the Diasporist lives and paints in two or more societies at once. Diasporism, as I wish to write about it, is as old as the hills (or caves) but new enough to react to today’s newspaper or last week’s aesthetic musing or tomorrow’s terror’ (Kitaj, 1989, p.19). Kitaj’s diasporism as a journey into his Jewish identity is less useful here than his creative methodology, creating both a written and visual dialogue between writers like Kafka and Benjamin and himself and using texts as central to the paintings as in his *In Our Time* series (1969). Kitaj’s conceptualisation is individualistic and quixotic, the term diaspora implies a community, a collective originary elsewhere (Cohen, 1997). Here I’m deploying the term translocation in order to stress the contingency and sense of

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<sup>42</sup> *Myth* (The Archive of Lost Objects, p.17), *Aphrodite* (ibid, p.32), *A Hierarchy of Naming* (ibid, p.46), *A Community of Imagined Crowds* (ibid, p.51), *The Adventure of the Line* (ibid, p.75), *The Ruined Cinema, the Screen Memory* (ibid, p.91) and *I Can’t Afford to Shop Therefore I Can’t Fully Exist* (ibid, p.104).

movement, of moving between the mind and body, emotion and intellect, contingent states, media, time and spaces rather than any originary or destined place. Trans echoes the ‘trans’ of transit, translation, and transformation, transitional, transitive, of becomings. The journey from the assemblage of the book to a more explicitly amorphous assemblage is central to this translocative practice.

### **The Archive of Lost Objects**

In addition to archiving fragments of poems, memoir, literary criticism and philosophy, the book also includes further experiments with form and includes two scripts, the aforementioned short story *A Minute Taker at the Conference of Birds* and an autobiographical essay in memory of the Cypriot poet Lysandros Pitharas, *Translating and Mutating Identities: Cypriots Who Write in English*. The first is the script is of the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* (the performance will be discussed more fully in Chapter Five). The second film script *Guilt Frame /Screen Memory* (The *Archive of Lost Objects*, p.153), explores cinema as site of collective memory and of forgetting, and is a film script which re-imagines the primal Oedipal scene, by inhabiting an imaginary space where Orpheus and Eurydice and actors and characters from the films *Gilda*, *Spellbound* and *Vertigo* commit a murder and are tried by Lacan, Irigaray and Robert Callaso. The screenplay enacts different kinds of remembering - through myth, through psychoanalysis and through cinema, and commemorates the ‘lost object’ of memory, which the (impossible) film the script calls up.

The context and modes of consumption, the media used in the creation of poetic discursive practice will alter the nature of the experience and the meanings made of the creative research in a dialogic context, both socially and semiotically; especially

as the creative research is carried out through different media which have different contexts of consumption: a series of film poems, a performance and a website. The poems provide a kind of map, which is made explicit in their transposition to the *MemoryMap* website. This map is both geographical and a network of media flows. The poems interact with contemporary media, the ghost of T.S. Eliot appears in *Dead Voices on the Radio* (p.29), an item on CNN inspires *World News* (p.28), as do the US TV quiz show *Jeopardy* (p.112) and newspaper headlines, *Stabbed in a Heart that was Broken* (p.53).

*The Archive of Lost Objects* is haunted, both thematically and formally by myth and by the ghostly echoes of appropriated voices. Deleuze, Ballard, and Foucault are all appropriated in *Becoming the Future Now* (p.114). Callaso, Lacan and Irigaray in the *Guilt Frame / Screen Memory* script (p.153). The author is declared dead, in as much their work is reappropriated, but then Christina Rossetti, Borges, Derrida and Emine Sevgi Ozdamar are invited to haunt the poem arising from their words in *Then Christina's Ghost Speaks* (p.20),<sup>43</sup> *A Broken God (in Borges' Paradiso)* (p.18),<sup>44</sup> *Ghost Dance* (p.41) and *On the Bridge Across the Golden Horn* (p. 70) respectively.

The book, as a fictional reproduction of the contents of a notebook serves as an originary archive of poems for all the other elements of the project. This should not be taken to imply that the textual has primacy over other media because this is not the case. Like all archives, *The Archive of Lost Objects* gives meaning to the things it contains, both through the process of selection and through acts of omission and exclusion, of cataloguing and presentation of the material which informed and form part of the performance. Many of the poems and texts in the collection are reproduced

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<sup>43</sup> For a photograph of the physical version see *the topography of the text* project at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/topography-text> images 25-27.

<sup>44</sup> For a photograph of the physical version see *the topography of the text* project at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/topography-text> image 28-29.

as PDFs on the *MemoryMap* website.

The move between the book and the website became a dialogue through the design and through the use of a poem generator as part of the *MemoryMap* website, located at [www.memorymap.org.uk/tags](http://www.memorymap.org.uk/tags). The tags each user attaches to their projects determine the pool of words displayed collectively. These are displayed in random sequences, the most popular tags are the largest, which change each time the page is refreshed. I used this method, of choosing key words and phrases from the tag page to begin writing the poems *Nicosia Girl* (p.37), *You Can't Get Lost in the Walled City* (p.65), *Dance the Ruined Map* (p.78) and *The Violent Self* (p.92).

The poem *The Eclipse* (p.103) arises out of the process of film collaging. Part of the script for the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*, a scene between Orpheus, Eurydice, Persephone and the Chorus in Scene Two, arose out of 'found writing' constructed out of the subtitles for the *screen/memory* film collage. I masked out the subtitles in the editing process but then reincorporated them as a poem. The repressed returns, but what returns is a translation, these words were never spoken in English. Another 'found' writing practice, inspired by Tom Phillips' *A Humument* (2005), involved physically rereading/rewriting poets' work by painting over blocks of texts. An example of this interaction with Christina Rossetti's poetry can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/topography-text>.

In addition to a dialogue between my work across the book, the website and the performance, there is also a dialogue between the images and texts within the book. The fifty-four black and white photographs in the book are integral to the work. The relationship between the image and the text beside it is at times allusive, at others elusive. The low key, flat, factual and documentary nature of the image implied by the scale and colour of the images is confirmed when the image seems to illustrate the

text, the text *Hotel Amnesia* and the images of the hotel sign (p.26-27), and then undermined when the image and text seem to have no straightforward illustrative connection, as in *Dreams You're Leaving* and the x ray image (p.111) for instance. Andre Breton's *Nadja* is never named but also haunts the book. Like Breton I pursue an imaginary woman (myself) through a real landscape and move between the fictive and factual, undermining the distinctions between the memory and fantasy.

In this chapter I have discussed the various voices, modes of address and styles of writing interwoven within *The Archive of Lost Objects* from the poetic and the autobiographical to literary criticism and philosophy and contextualised them in relation to the work of Mahjoub, Hussein, Ozdamar and Pamuk as writers within the field of life writing. Their writing strategies are diverse but their common theme is of exploring identities at the cusp of the imagined and imaginary borders between East and West and of doing so from the peripheries. In the next chapter delineation of a field of expanded life writing is developed through an appraisal of the work of a diverse group of artists, writers and performers whose autobiographical work has writing at its centre, but who take that writing beyond the conventional structures of the book through a relay between writing and photography, painting, book-making, film, installation and performance. Writing is in active dialogue with other media and in the move beyond text, other media forms are also transformed into forms of writing the self.

## Chapter 3: Writing off the Page



### Expanded Life Writing

In the last chapter I framed my work in relation to life writing. In this chapter I will argue for a field I identify as ‘expanded life writing’, autobiographical art practice in which the juxtaposition of text or voice and image are integral, coupled with a sense of both formal and thematic movement at its heart, as the sphere of my practice. The new category of ‘expanded life writing’; analogous to the category of ‘expanded cinema’ is deployed in order to understand the new perspectives this practice of remapping artistic terrain in terms of new, previously invisible, connections to other forms and practices makes possible. Just as expanded cinema (Curtis, 2008) broke free of the confines of the cinematic apparatus (Metz, 1974) in order to explore and elaborate upon the possibilities of new configurations of screen space I propose and delineate a genealogy of autobiographical practice that takes life writing off the page. The programme notes for the seminal the Expanded Cinema season at the Arnolfini gallery in 1976, which was to define the movement, described expanded cinema as

a relatively new visual medium/form. It combines the visual power of film with the preoccupations of the other visual art forms. It is within this medium that a recognisable and tangible relationship occurs between film and the other visual



arts. This is one of the reasons why expanded cinema is one of the most exciting prospects for the visual arts in the future (Arnolfini 1976).

The exhibition included ‘multi-projection as inter-related image, environmental documentation, environmental, diaristic, participation/events, installation, performance and other works which were a mixture of some or all of these...One of its major contributions is its inclusion of live performance by the artists’ (Arnolfini 1976).

The identification and creation of an expanded category of autobiographical writing that moves beyond its original mode of mediation makes visible previously invisible sensibilities and values. The move across media is also a journey across fields of cultural practice and power. An expanded field of practice seeks to foreground practice at the peripheries of movements at institutions. As well as acknowledging actual, virtual and conceptual communities of practice, the delineation of new categories enables the practitioner to challenge canonical aesthetic and political narratives and histories of practice and ideas. In order to define and map the diverse works that provided a terrain of practice that I categorise as expanded life writing, I focus on the work on a number antecedent works by Claude Cahun, Charlotte Saloman, Mona Hatoum, Laurie Anderson, Anne Carson and Tracey Emin. I develop the concept of expanded life writing by discussing their diverse and differing strategies and sources of inspiration for taking forms of autobiographical writing beyond text and off the page.

The book is transformed in Cahun’s *Disavowals* (1930), Charlotte Saloman’s *Life? Or Theatre* (1942) and Anne Carson’s *Nox* (2010). The page becomes a screen that reflects her mother’s hand writing in Mona Hatoum’s *Measures of Distance* (1988). Emin uses blankets as pages, their materiality makes maps of her text as well as producing a fragmentary memoir *Strangeland* (2005) whilst Laurie Anderson

performs writing in *Delusions* (2010), so that the page dematerialises on stage. A genealogy of artists working in expanded life writing is traced from Claude Cahun's allusive autobiographical photographic and textual disavowals of gender identity to Tracey Emin's autobiographical writing and installations. All are autobiographical works that define the inspirational parameters of the field of practice of expanded life writing. Although these works can be seen, from a sociological perspective, as arising from differing cultural spheres it can be argued that they all constitute forms of writing, both conventionally in the literary sense, and in expanded forms of writing which also deploy visual work and/or performance. Furthermore, a unifying strategy of employing collage techniques to juxtapose media (film, sound, photography, painting, writing, live performance, installation), discourses (intimate, poetic and scholarly), and literary styles (demotic, literary and academic) to interrogate memory and identity is evident in all these works. A spatial and sensory dimension is key too, of moving between places, moments in time, fact and fiction, dream and reality, of translating across languages, cultures, voice and text, text and image, word and body.

As Guattari observes, 'artistic cartographies have always been an essential element of the framework of every society' (Guattari, 1995, p.130). To name a new territory is to create a new space of possibility for unframing subjectivity itself, in the process of framing autobiographical poetry, performance writing and art.

To speak of machines rather than drives, Fluxes rather than libido, existential Territories rather than instances of the self and of transference, incorporeal Universes rather than unconscious complexes and sublimation, chaosmic entities rather than signifiers... Their pragmatic is often unforeseeable, distant and different. Who knows what will be taken up by others, for other uses, or what bifurcations they will lead to! (Guattari, 1995, p.126)

Memory is traditionally spatial (Yates, 1966) and visual and thus performance and spatial installation are as central to the category of expanded life writing as they are to expanded cinema. Beyond the screen and the gallery, expanded life writing can encompass spoken word poetics. An embodied synesthetic move is key to expanded life writing. Memory is central to the act of poesis, and poetics to the evocation of memory. For the philosopher Kuhns, (1971)

Just as the philosopher assumes that all can share his views because of the power of logic ... so the poet assumes that all can come to participate in what is initially private through the sharing of memory, and in sensory capacities which may be stimulated by the power of language'. A poesis of memory is essentially synesthetic, 'in seeking to work out explicitly the power of memory and synaesthesia, I am stating what it is that distinguishes poetic performance from philosophical argument, comparing the use of the past as history and as memory, and comparing the use of the present as dialectical relationship and as synaesthesia.... What holds argument together is the cement of validity, what holds performance together is the interpenetration of sensory and conceptual capacities, the cement of synaesthesia (Kuhns, 1971, p.106).

Expanded life writing foregrounds the embodied and synesthetic nature of memory because it is a practice that inhabits the border zones and interstices of both media (modes of transmission) and of cultural forms (genres, cultural practices). Conducting creative research utilising the concept of expanded life writing involves an anthropological sense of situated self-awareness (Geertz, 1988) and an aesthetic/archival gaze upon one's own life. The practice of expanded writing enabled me to both produce autobiographical texts, films and images, and to reconfigure them by 'rewriting' them through reappropriation, juxtaposition, and palimpsest drawing on Freud and Deleuze's theorisations of memory and time and thus creating a

translocated and inclusory space of memory through a range of forms: a performance, book, website and DVD.

### **Disavowals of Identity**

Claude Cahun's work is a key modernist exemplar of expanded life writing. Cahun's textual and photographic work defies easy categorisation. Cahun's work was marginalised and known only by a Modernist cultural cognoscente during her lifetime. The charge of dilettantism made against her work by contemporary critics, as well sexist social structures operating in the art world in general, and in the Surrealist movement in particular (Chadwick, 1985), have some bearing on her marginal status. She has achieved posthumous acclaim,<sup>45</sup> chiefly as a 'Surrealist' photographer<sup>46</sup> renowned for her highly stylised and often uncanny self-portraits which present her in multiple, frequently fantastically androgynous, guises which elude gender classification. Cahun's photographs and photographic collages are marked by a deeply performative theatrical self-expressivity that undermines the notion of a unified self, and presents us with a playful, expanded exploration of identity.

Cahun's photographic work invites comparison with Duchamp's transgender self-representation as Rose Selavy (Tashjian, 1998). Cahun's work is intensely autobiographical, taking herself as her subject; she defies determinacy and certainty across all aspects of identity. Francois Leperlier sees her work as centrally driven by the desire to 'cross, and overcome, all gender boundaries (masculine, feminine, androgyny, homosexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality), to arrive, ideally, at just one

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<sup>45</sup> Whitney Chadwick's 1985 book *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement* was chiefly instrumental in reviving Cahun's reputation and introducing her work as part of an obscured canon of women artists employing Surrealist methodologies in their work. Francois Leperlier's 1992 critical monograph (*Claude Cahun: L'ecart et la Metmorphose* Paris: Jean-Michel Place) was the first, and to date remains the only major study of this artist's work.

<sup>46</sup> Cahun was 'one of the rare women who actively participated in this (surrealist) movement in its most critical and crucial years' (Leperlier quoted in Soloman-Godeau (1998 p. 112).

gender, one's own, which could never be compared with any other' (Cahun, 2007, p.209). Cahun herself asks 'Masculine? Feminine? It depends on the situation. Neuter is the only gender that always suits me. If it existed in our language no one would be able to see my thought's vacillations. I'd be a worker bee for good' (Cahun, 2007, p.152).

Cahun's major autobiographical written work *Disavowals* was largely compiled between 1919-25 and was published in a limited edition of 500 copies in 1930. Cahun's writing defies easy categorisation as autobiography. Her intention is 'to make myself another vocabulary, brighten the silvering on the mirror, wink, swindle myself, improve my skeleton with a fluke muscle, correct my faults and copy my actions, divide myself to rule myself, multiply myself so I can make my mark, in short: make a mockery of ourselves – that can't change anything' (Cahun, 2007, p.201). Whilst *Disavowals* is intensely personal, Cahun rejects a conventional narrative structure. Fragmentary and aphoristic - 'the siren is the only victim of the siren' (Cahun, 2007, p.24), the book is composed of remembered and imaginary events - dreams, letters, brief philosophical reflections, maxims, snatches of conversation, coded and disguised fantasy divided into nine chapters accompanied by ten photomontages, at the beginning of each chapter. In his preface for the original edition of the book Pierre Mac Orlan calls Cahun's texts 'poem-essays' (Cahun, 2007, p.xxv). Poetics is central to Cahun's work; she sees her visual work as an extension of poetry and calls her photographs 'visual poems' (Cahun, 2007, p.xx). There is an elision between her visual and written language. Across visual and written media her work is both intensely personal and thus revealing: 'indiscreet and brutal, I enjoy looking at what's underneath the crossed out bits of my soul' (Cahun, 2007, p.6), but also refuses easy comprehension. An ungraspable sense of difficulty is central to

understanding the self, ‘when the mechanism has been completely deconstructed, the mystery remains in tact. Sometimes chance hands us a little swatch of soul’ (Cahun, 2007, p.51).

Each section is introduced by a photomontage by Cahun of herself in differing guises and at different ages, and features totemic objects (the hand held mirror, the chess set, scissors) and phrases. The themes and images that reoccur are of mirrors, masks, of duality and an unease regarding the body. Whilst her visual work is stylishly accessible Cahun’s writing is insistently ‘difficult’, deliberately awkward, subverting the rules of grammar, logic and gender. Confessions are made and then retracted, sentences shift from first to third person, change gender and tense. Cahun employs, interrogates and subverts myth, both Biblical (Salome and Delilah) and Hellenic (Narcissus, Marsyas); and creates a literary dialogue with Wilde, Mallarme, Baudelaire and Gide. As Susan de Muth, Cahun’s translator, notes there is an ‘overall effect of a Rimbaudian ‘derangement of the senses’ ‘ (Cahun, 2007, p.xix). However, despite the relative inaccessibility of the text *Disavowals* is a bold and inviting text, quotidian and fantastical in turn. Cahun asks us ‘what does a well-behaved child dream about, apart from the inhumane, the monstrous, the impossible? The ordinary’ (Cahun, 2007, p.87). Despite the difficult writing that is necessary to reflect the indeterminate flux of selfhood, without tidying it up into easily digested narrative Cahun is playful. Her fictionalised alter ego is granted ‘permission to skim, to skip pages, pages and pages – and to read between the lines, at her leisure, as she wishes’ (Cahun, 2007, p.87). The conjunction of Cahun’s photomontages and writing theatricalises identity. Cahun did in fact perform as an actor in the experimental theatre of Pierre Albert-Birot (Salomon-Gadeau, 1999, p.112). Performance is central, as a theme as well as a practice, in expanded life writing, as is movement, a

sense of journey. Mac Orlan calls Cahun ‘a wandering writer. She progresses irresistibly through the night’, this autobiographical journey across poetry and photography leads to ‘a strange congress of sometimes tender, sometimes furious forms and ideas. A philosophical orchestra plays discreetly’ (Cahun, 2007, p.xxvi). Whether the orchestra is philosophical, as in Cahun’s work, imaginary as in Saloman’s or a physically performed collaboration as in Anderson’s work expanded life writing performs writing by incorporating music and the visual with the poetics of writing.

### **Life? Or Theatre?**

Charlotte Saloman’s autobiographical work *Life? Or Theatre?*, a ‘three coloured play with music’ (Belinfante, 1998, p.11) forms a seminal text for this proposed category. Saloman herself draws inspiration from, and subverts the fascistic associations relating to Wagner’s concept of the ‘total artwork’ or *Gesamtkunstwerk* (Wagner, 1994), which fuses music, poetry and the visual arts. In contrast with the German Romantic notion of the ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ or Total Artwork, ‘which came into being through a decidedly masculine cultural hero producing masterpieces thought to be intensely German in character’ (Rosenthal, 1998,p.13) Saloman’s work subverts these values by producing a work which is domestic, feminine and speaks of exclusion from, rather than exultation through, national identity. The concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* has also been reappropriated in relation to German Expressionism (Beil, 2010), modernism and contemporary art (Finger, 2010). Critics, such as Deborah Lewer have characterized this reappropriation as ‘defiantly inclusive’ and ask ‘where does one distinguish between the specifics of the ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ and the wider avant-garde project of breaking down the barriers between art and life?’

(Lewer, 2011). The concept of Gesamtkunstwerk offers a useful perspective on the category of expanded life writing but the former chiefly derives its impetus from music whereas the latter category emphasizes the role of writing in autobiographical work.

A philosophical, and imaginary orchestra is a central leitmotiv in Charlotte Saloman's autobiographical collection of images and texts *Life? Or Theatre?* which as the title suggests, also employs performance as a central metaphor. The work is comprised of 800 gouaches incorporating and accompanied by text completed between 1940, after the suicide of her grandmother and 1942, when she was deported to Auschwitz, where she was subsequently murdered. Unlike many works within the category of expanded life writing, *Life? Or Theatre?* proceeds chronologically and has an easily discernable narrative. The narrative is conceived and constructed as an opera, consisting of a prelude, a main section and an epilogue. Borrowing the visual story telling techniques of Medieval painting,<sup>47</sup> the comic strip and the film storyboard, Saloman explores the complex three way relationship between her fictional alter ego Charlotte Kahn, her step-mother Paula (who becomes Paulinka) and Alfred Wolfsohn (Daberlohn), though a sequence of 800 gouaches using only three colours,<sup>48</sup> red, yellow and blue. The images frequently contain text and texts written on tracing paper accompany the images. Despite the constraints of a limited palette the images and the breadth of expression conveyed in the works is remarkable. Saloman invents a style of her own and her perspective is mobile and shifts constantly presenting us with views that speak of cinematic language as when a camera swoops from above in dolly shots, in close ups and contrasting panoramic crown scenes.

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<sup>47</sup> An example of this technique, where multiple moments inhabit the space, can be seen in Lucas Cranach's *The Garden of Eden: the Creation of Adam and Eve, the Fall, the Expulsion* 1530 where the story is told from right to left in the background whilst God instructs the couple in the foreground.

<sup>48</sup> Rosenthal posits that Saloman is employing Goethe's colour theory here. (Rosenthal, 1998 )



The work spans 1913-1940. The main section begins with the rising ubiquity of the swastika and the exclusion of Jews from public life in 1933 and ends in 1939 when Charlotte leaves Berlin for the South of France. The work moves from the political to the intensely personal. Her style moves from the illustrative, to expressionistic and borders on the abstract at times. Her style becomes increasingly loose, bold and impressionistic until, at its closure, it becomes pure text. These differences in style are linked to the characters portrayed. In her introduction to the work Saloman says ‘ the varied nature of the paintings should be attributed less to the author, than to the varied nature of the characters portrayed. The author has tried – as is apparent perhaps most clearly in the Main Section, to go completely out of herself and to allow the characters to sing or speak in their own voices. In order to achieve this, many artistic values had to renounced’ (Belinfante, 1998, p.47)

Like Cahun’s *Disavowal*, Saloman’s *Life? Or Theatre?* is rich with layers of cultural allusion to fine art, literature, philosophy and music. These references ‘act like bells of memory ringing in the mind’ (Rosenthal, 1998, p.10). Saloman hums as she works (Belinfante, 1998, p.46) and she stipulates the music that accompanies the images and text German folk songs, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven Schubert, Weber and Bizet are all cited. The silence, the lack of the music itself, or the internal echo of the tune in one’s memory if one shares her cultural references, gives the work poignancy and underlines the sense of loss central to the work. There are multiple losses at the heart of the book. All the women in Charlotte’s immediate family, her mother, her aunt and her grandmother, committed suicide. Charlotte was only nine when her mother died, although she was not to learn that this had been by her own hand until much later. The love triangle at the heart of the narrative, between Charlotte, her stepmother and Alfred Wolfsohn, a singing teacher and philosopher (whose theories

on the connections between the voice and the soul are recounted in the work), also raises other ghosts. Wolfsohn had been severely traumatized by his experiences during the First World War.

### **Measuring Distance**

Like Saloman, Hatoum also uses the movement between text and image and text as image to explore themes of war, displacement and diaspora. The living becomes grief-ghosts in her 'video tape' *Measures of Distance* (1988),<sup>49</sup> which explores war, exile and diaspora through the lens of her relationship with her Palestinian mother in war torn Beirut. She presents an archive of material about her mother, letters from her, photographs of her in the shower and audio recordings of their mother-daughter conversations. These fragments are layers in a palimpsest of sound - the artist and her mother speaking in Arabic, the music of female voices and laughter, the ambient noises of her mother's house, Hatoum reading translations of her mother's letters; and images - grainy photos of Hatoum's mother naked in the shower, the curved and curly Arabic script of her letters superimposed on her body which echo her curves. Memory is immanent and opaque. This autobiographical archive is fragile and its meaning mutable, her mother's memories of little Mona as a child, the memories signified by her photographs are framed by 'measures of distance', whether the view understands the women's conversation, can read the letters her mother writes and the political situation that frames the women's exchange.

Hatoum is enacting layers of exile here, from Palestine to Beirut, from Beirut to London and the measures the distance between cultures, mother and daughter, text and image, sound and image, presence and absence. Hatoum's film-poem remembers

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<sup>49</sup> The piece was originally an installation featuring the artist.

war yet there is no archive footage of 1948, or of the civil war in Lebanon. Hatoum becomes Mona the daughter, the artist, the exile, travels between mutually incompatible but known worlds. In contrast her mother mourns the distances, from her daughter, from her family in Palestine. 'I feels as though I have been stripped naked to my soul' she tells Mona. Her physical nudity makes the vulnerability manifest. Her nakedness also speaks of the intimacy and trust between mother and daughter. The sound track intertwines the sounds of a conversation about their sexuality between the two women with the distant sound of traffic. Her father's interdictions against Hatoum photographing her mother in the shower and discussing such things are shown to have no jurisdiction in this all female world.

As her mother tells her 'I understand you feel so fragmented. You feel you don't belong anywhere', images of her body become a series of fragmentary body shots: an elbow, a knee, a hand. The body is not a metaphor for the soul; it is the site of identity. Her mother's handwritten letters are superimposed on her naked body, at times a veil of words, at others a palimpsest of barbed wire, as the mother writes of her losses in war, of her inability to call Mona as the phone lines in their neighbourhood have melted from the shelling, of not being able to send Mona letters as the closest post office has been bombed....the last letter is sent with someone who is going to England as she says she doesn't know when she can find another person going to England to give them a letter. The sense of foreboding in her words is amplified as her daughter reads them out over a black screen. Absence and distance haunt Mona's voice, as she reads her mother's words.

## Bereavement as Exile

The translocation revealed in expanded life writing is often literal as in the work of Saloman and Hatoum, or can be an emotional dislocation. Bereavement is a kind of exile, the erasing of a private culture, the loss of some crucial aspect of the self in relation to the other and to the sense of where they come from, that originary space that no longer exists. With *NOX* (2010) and *Delusion* (2010) both Anne Carson and Laurie Anderson have produced autobiographical works relating to the death of family member, which exemplify expanded life writing.

Characterised by an experimental approach to language which explores the relationship between written and other languages, Carson's *NOX* resembles, a large book with a dark grey slab of a hard cover, although on closer inspection it reveals itself as a concertina of pages, which speaks of the precursor of the book, the scroll. The box containing the pages is a sort of headstone. In fragment 5.6 Carson tells us 'there is no stone and anyway he had changed his name (Carson, 2010). The pages within are an elegy to the older brother who ran away in 1978 and died unexpectedly shortly after getting back in touch in 2000. Her mourning also changes names, moves from Latin to English. Carson has already illustrated her poetic, personal and scholarly engagement with the fragment (Carson 1996, 1998 and 2002) in her engagements with the poets Sappho (1996, 2002) and Stesichoros (1998). In this engagement with Catullus she is more explicitly autobiographical. Carson's collage of texts, prose poems, reflections on history and elegy through Hekataios and Herodotus and definitions from a Latin to English dictionary, uses Catullus' poem 101, an elegy to his brother who died in the Troad,<sup>50</sup> as its framing device. A stained facsimile of the poem in Latin opens the scroll and the dictionary definition of each word is

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<sup>50</sup> The Troad a peninsular region now known as Canakkale in Turkey, was so-called because it had been ruled by the Trojans (Cook, 1988).

interspersed throughout Carson's poetic and academic reflections on loss and her brother's disappearance and death. Yet the individual dictionary definitions of each word of the Catullus poem do not make a translation. Just as these pages do not constitute the mourning itself but are artefacts relating to that process.

These pages seem to be photocopies of a notebook filled with a palimpsest of scraps of text, photographs and scribbles – her brother's name Michael is scrawled repeatedly, so vehemently that we see the marks which bled through to the page behind it in the original notebook. Two dimensional copies of stapled collages, congealed sealing wax, stamps, the corner of an aerogram, torn fragments of handwritten letters, typed messages speak of the three dimensionality of the objects, remind us that this is a memory of the object, not the object itself. In fragment 1.0 Carson tells us: 'I wanted to fill my elegy with light of all kinds. But death makes us stingy. There is nothing more to be expended on that, we think, he's dead. Love cannot alter it. Words cannot add to it. No matter how I try to evoke the starry lad he was, it remains a plain, odd history. So I begin to think about history' (Carson, 2010) It is not just her reflections on history themselves but also the photocopied quality of the pages, the edges of the paper they have been typed on then stuck in the book, then reproduced in this concertina of paper that gives us a sense of doing history. We are always aware that we hold a copy of something, something elsewhere. Carson's poetry and translations have always engaged with lost fragment, bringing to the fore both the brightness and new possible readings of the shard that remains, most notably in her engagement with Sappho in *Eros the Bittersweet* (Carson, 1996).

The seductive impossibility of translation proves to be scant distraction from mourning. 'Prowling the meaning of a word, prowling the history of a person, no use expecting a flood of light. Human words have no main switch. But all those little

kidnaps in the dark. And then the luminous, big, shivering, discandied, unrepentant, barking web of them that hangs in your mind when you turn back to the page you were trying to translate' (Carson, 2010). The act of translation is not limited to the journey between Latin and English, although Carson does make sense of the individual words and produce an English translation of the verse; but also encompasses from emotion to language, between lexical and non-verbal languages. For Carson 'It's not about grief. It's about understanding other people and their histories as if we are all separate languages. That's what I was trying to explore. Exploring grief would have made it a book about me, and I didn't want that. Carl Sagan described the universe saying, 'Well, it's a million miles of dark empty space with nothing in it and no meaning, but there are a few places with light. We want to focus on the light places.' I think that's a good rubric' (Carson in Seghal, 2011).

As noted elsewhere, expanded life writing has a strongly performative element, which can emerge both through language and through physical performance. *NOX* has moved beyond a paperbound collaboration with the designer Robert Currie, to collaboration with the dancer Rashoun Mitchell in the same year the book was published. Carson and Currie both participated in the performance, they were present on stage and projected lights although Carson's voice was recorded and layered, as was the music for polyphonic guitar and alto saxophone by Ben Miller. The performance was critically acclaimed for its innovative use of space.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> A reviewer describes the performance thus

'Outside the theater, Silas Riener (the leggings of his costume ripped) runs along a wooden ledge like a specter. He's separated from us by the theater's windows but claims our attention with the alarming presence of a ghost. Meanwhile, Mr. Mitchell, quieter and more vulnerable, watches him from a distance. At once we're hurled into the drama of fraternal loss, the distance between dead and living, the closeness of two men with a shared past who are now in separate worlds. In the duet that develops (indoors, with blinds down) from this, the two dancers meet like alternative versions of each other in a drama so psychologically strange and imaginative — buoyed and supported by Ms. Carson's words — that it recalls Ingmar Bergman's film *Persona*' (Macauley, 2010).

In expanded life writing poesis makes the memory mobile, moving off the page, liveness is evoked through use the voice and music, movement, expanding into space and then recalling other mediated environments, of film in this instance.

## Performing Writing

Poetics and performance have always been central to Laurie Anderson's multimedia performance art,<sup>52</sup> which in its formal and multimedia experimentation, intellectual and cultural self-consciousness and frequently autobiographical subject matter exemplifies expanded life writing practice. During the late 1970s Anderson made a number of voice/music recordings, which were most notably released by the New York poet John Giorno's record label *Giorno Poetry Systems*. Anderson released a double-album shared with Giorno and William Burroughs; *You're the Guy I Want to Share My Money With*, (the original release had one LP side for each artist, with the fourth side triple-grooved, one for each, so you'd get a different one, depending on where you put the needle down).<sup>53</sup> Anderson's later work engages with more canonical writers, for instance with Melville in her opera *Songs and Stories From Moby Dick* (1999-2000). Her performance *Delusion* (2010) is inspired by classic storytellers, notably Honoré Balzac, Laurence Sterne and Yasujiro Ozu.<sup>54</sup> Sterne's digressive narrative style is her biggest influence. 'I love following a thread along until it just becomes as crazy as it can be. And he's the master of that kind of storytelling' (Morrow, 2010). Anderson is not interested in conventional plot, 'I think

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<sup>52</sup> For a history of Anderson's practice from the 1970s to 2000 see Goldberg, 2000.

<sup>53</sup> Photographs and descriptions of many of these early performances were included in Anderson's retrospective book, *Stories from the Nerve Bible*.

<sup>54</sup> 'From French novelist Balzac, Anderson borrows the use of inanimate objects or meteorological events to link different human stories. From Ozu, the sublime Japanese filmmaker of *Tokyo Story* fame, she takes a passion for intimate family drama. 'He's like a miniaturist, really,' she says. 'He tells these small and very devastating stories.' (Morrow, 2010)

plot is something that takes all the boring days out and leaves the exciting ones in. Most real things unravel in a much more textured way'.<sup>55</sup>

In her recent performance piece *Delusion* (2010), in which she explores her mother's death and her sense of bereavement, Anderson weaves together a series of vignettes: personal family anecdotes, surreal political reveries, stories, recounted dreams<sup>56</sup> with often nonrepresentational sound and visuals. Anderson's voice, sometimes distorted, always gently unemotional, with the uncanny calm of Kubrick's *HAL*, holds the disparate elements of the performance and the meandering (non) narrative. The word, both as voice and written language melts into the flow of visuals and light projection. Anderson's performance eschews the spectacular, is often redolent of the lecture hall. Anderson would attend lectures in the art department at Barnard College at the age of twenty, 'mesmerized by the hum of the speaker's voice and by the bright lights projected onto the ceiling-high screen, which sometimes caught the speaker in its beam. It was a structure that would later become her ideal form for communicating ideas' (Goldberg, 2000, p.27). An intellectual self-consciousness and emotional distancing are common to the works of expanded life writing thus far, but there are other, more direct and less literary strategies for autobiographical multimedia practice.

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<sup>55</sup> Laurie Anderson interviewed in *Wired*, 1992 Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/musicblog/2012/mar/23/laurie-anderson-room-for-london/print>. Accessed 04.04.2011

<sup>56</sup> 'It's about the voice and conversation and a collection of stories that kind of ramble through dogs, Russia's space program, ancestors and a fair amount of political commentary and a lot of violin.' Anderson interviewed in *None Such*, 2010 Available at <http://www.nonesuch.com/journal/laurie-anderson-premieres-delusion-in-vancouver-for-cultural-olympiad-2010-02-17> Accessed 04.04.2011.



## How to Become a Nomad and an Immigrant and a Gypsy

For the artist Tracey Emin her journey in her autobiographical texts culled from her artwork, *Strangeland* (2005) measures the distance from the known to the unknown. Emin explores the Cypriot aspect of her identity through the family romance, through her love for her father. Her absent father is the sole bearer of Turkish Cypriotness; there is no wider social network to connect her to the island. For Tracey, Enver Emin is not a part of Turkish Cyprus; Turkish Cyprus is a part of her father. The imagined paternal realm, the fatherland, is a 'strangeland'. Her most sustained representations of her diasporic identity occur in the 'Fatherland' section of her book *Strangeland*, which recycles many of the texts, used in her exhibitions. Here Emin frequently represents Turkishness and Turkish Cypriotness as an outside, a mysterious realm. One disadvantage of the book format of *Strangeland* is that the words lose much of their urgency, potential irony and power when the difficulty of writing, the materiality of the medium – the visual and tactile richness of quilting, needle work, brightness of neon lighting, the messiness of the monoprint, or the intimacy of handwritten notes with biro or pencil are lost in typeface, when most of the misspellings are corrected, the punctuation put in place. Much intensity and opacity is lost in removing the ill-literacy, the dis-eased, uneasy aspects of her language, the sous-rature of crossings out; the lack of punctuation which is often key to Emin's work. The voice becomes flattened. Enver's letter *Knowing my Enemy* which is exhibited alongside the 2002 installation of the same name, with all its misspellings is more powerful than the corrected transcript. The objects that anchor the text, for instance Ismail Hos' lighter and the piece of writing *Cleopatra's Gate* 'after Hemmingway' (sic) make the distance in writing style between Emin and Hemingway reflect the distance between Tracey and the place she is experiencing, on

the page the distance becomes bathetic rather than reflecting on the pathos of the piece transformed by the poetics of the archive.

How many people today live in a language that is not their own? Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own and know poorly the major language that they are forced to serve? This is the problem of immigrants, and especially of their children, the problem of minorities, the problem of a minor literature, but also a problem for all of us: how to tear a minor literature away from its own language, allowing it to challenge the language and making it follow a sober revolutionary path? How to become a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy in relation to one's own language? (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986. p. 19)

Whilst Tracey Emin's artworks explore how to become a nomad, immigrant and gypsy in language through artistic strategies and Enver Emin's letter reveal his immigrant English the book flattens both. Stories are perhaps our most invaluable heritage; the family stories about us, where we come from, where we belong, tell us whom we are. The diasporic identity that emerges through her father's mythmaking is naïve and orientalist in the extreme. Enver Emin's reminiscences as presented by Tracey Emin are heavily eroticised and it's hard to tell to what extent there is any irony in either the paternal delivery or her reception of his memories/fantasies of seduction by a string of beautiful women in the hamam from the age of twelve. Mr Emin's interpretation of history is similarly lurid. He tells Tracey the Ottomans gave Cyprus to Queen Victoria because 'she spent one night in Istanbul at the Sultan's palace'. Emin senior marries a 16 year old in his 70s, talks about his grandfather's four wives, and why he didn't marry her mother. All the Turkish men Tracey Emin portrays are sexualized, displacements of the father figure, from Ismail Hos, her father's chauffeur and her mother's lover, Abdullah, Tracey's fisherman lover who is 'old enough to be her father', to the men who come on to her in the bar on the ferry from Turkey to Cyprus.

To Emin Turkish men are predatory and domineering. Her fisherman lover makes his wife leave the house so he can make love to Tracey. The peasant women are old and ugly, 'big and fat, covered from head to foot' (Emin, 2005, p.113); the villagers are 'hardy, strong and basic' (Emin, 2005, p.116). When her father comes to find her during her affair with Abdullah, she fears (hopes?) he will be angry with her whilst he fears she will be jealous of her six year old half sister (Emin, 2005, p.125) by his latest wife. Turkish Cypriotness is a fatherland, a lost childhood, a father who is always leaving; it is an outside, a strangeland, and a language she does not speak. Homi Bhabha quotes Heidegger at the beginning of *The Location of Culture* 'A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing' (Bhabha, 2004). This serves as a useful reminder that the outside is also within, constitutes it: whilst Turkishness is 'outside' that paternal unknowability (and unattainability) is also home, it is also within.

*Hotel International* 1993 Emin's first quilt, appliquéd on her childhood comfort blanket, can be read as a map rather than a flag where London, Cyprus, Margate and Istanbul are all in the same territory, as are Las Vegas, 3d Castle Hill, Holy Trinity and Riverway. Names, streets, specific addresses, cities, emotions are all contained within *Hotel International* the perfect place to grow. The blanket as autobiographical territory, as map creates what Bhabha calls an 'interrogatory, interstitial space' (Bhabha, 2004, p.3) highlighting the fragmentary nature of identity, 'cultural liminality within the nation' (Bhabha, 2004, p.148) presenting us with a series of border situations and thresholds as the sites where identities are performed and contested. Emin's birth date 3-7-1963 is appliquéd on the top right hand corner of her comfort blanket. The date 1963 is repeated in many of her works and in their titles, as

well as being the artist's date this is a significant date in Turkish Cypriot collective memory as the year culminated in 'Kanli Noel' Bloody Christmas, intercommunal conflict and the withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriots into enclaves not recognized or served by the Republic of Cyprus.

Whilst the punk resonance of *No Chance (what a year)* is implicit in its aesthetic of bricolage and she makes an explicit reference to the 1982 British war in the Falklands, the 1963 and 1974 wars in Cyprus do not resonate in her work at all. This is not to imply that it ought but to be mindful of the fact that the specificity of a diasporic identity is not a given, that it is a collectively produced identity, not an essential or fixed inheritance. 'Diasporic identity requires specific kinds of socially-induced nourishing, the sources of which lie both within the community itself and the society at large' (Canefe, 2002b).

Canefe defines diasporic Turkish Cypriot identity as emerging through a flux, a negotiated process of 'incorporating the history of the diaspora community as a central motif in their own life histories', 'a general attitude – which could be critical or affirmative – that establishes regular connections between personal and communal history' (Canefe, 2002b). The story of every family constituted by parents from different cultures is a civilisation of its own, with its own creoles and bricolage of inherited, adopted and adapted customs, rituals and festivals. Degrees of assimilation and ties to wider community will determine the degree to which diasporic identity, which is never fixed, is a presence, a cultural conversation, or an absence, an unknown story. Issues around the degree to which one is primarily *Turkish* Cypriot, or a *Turkish Cypriot* which are key to that diasporic identity are not visible in Emin's story, her fatherland knows no border between Cyprus and Turkey. Canefe observes that 'Turkish Cypriots, could be classified simply as Turks, a designation with which

most of them feel uncomfortable; as Cypriots, a classification which most associate with Greek Cypriots only and which therefore also makes them uneasy; or, simply as yet another British ethnic minority, a categorization that would erase their differences from other minorities. Therefore, for many members of the community it makes more sense to hold on to an Anglo-Cypriot identity with Turkishness and Islam as added components while living in England, and to emphasize Cypriotness while living in Turkey or Northern Cyprus' (Canefe, 2002b).

Emin's is a diasporic identity as absence that knows no such negotiations; it is the identity that is fashioned out of the scraps of stories her father tells her, without what Canefe calls 'socially-induced nourishing' or a collective memory. 'Fatherland' is somewhere outside, and it has a utopic quality in *Mad Tracey from Margate. Everyone's been there*. (1997) In bold the blanket tells us 'she was masterbating', 'mad tracey from margate,' and 'I said fuck off back to your week world that you came from', speaking of adolescent sexuality but a smaller panel tells us sweetly 'Hey dady I love you you and me on our island standing by the sea the pass and the present'.

The artlessness of the film *Emin and Emin by the Shore* (1996), which shows Cyprus/ Turkey as tourist destination, the shore is unnamed unmarked territory. We hear her father singing *Uskudara Gideriken*, a popular late Ottoman song about an Ottoman lady's seduction by her male secretary on a rainy journey, the roar of the waves and most memorably the tenderness of her 'I love you daddy' at the end. From Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* to Cukor's *A Star is Born*, the landscape of shore and the sea brings intimations of death with it. There is an elegiac quality to the work, the fear of her father's last abandonment. We are deterritorialised, denied a specific geography, history and geography have imploded into the father daughter

relationship, 'you and me on our island standing by the sea the past and the present'. 'I've often tried to make a place in my work where I think my dad would be happy. Or where I would be happy. ' Tracey Emin tells us in an interview with Rugoff in the catalogue in relation to her installation *Knowing My Enemy* 2002 (Rugoff, 2011).

Yet this does not seem to be a place to be happy in, it is a precarious, inhospitable, dangerous structure contrasting with the cosiness of the quilts. 'You can imagine coming across it on a beach somewhere, and finding there's no one there, but then just as you're walking away, you turn back and you see the curtains move' (Rugoff, 2011). It is 'somewhere' almost nowhere, a sort of utopia, an uninhabitable, untenable space that is home against the odds. Would Enver be happy here? He was not happy to stay at the International Hotel. Who is the enemy? Enver identifies his enemies as alcohol, smoking, gambling and sex. The artist tells us he gave her the letter in order to get her to cut down on her drinking. But the title invites us to ask does Tracey know her enemy? Do we know ours? Are our enemies within like Enver's? Is this a place to escape our enemies, or to exile them?

The film *Sometimes the dress is worth more money than the money* (2000-2001) highlights the key aspect of Emin's diasporic identity that is its geographical non-specificity. This is filmed in Cyprus but it could be anywhere, highlighted by the use of Morricone on the soundtrack, which calls to mind the US western myth transposed to Europe in the Spaghetti western, then transformed by Tarantino with that other global cinematic genre of the Hong Kong action film. We are in the mythic realm, the myth of the frontier, the myth of the bride and the site of the translations, transpositions and transformation of myth. It is a Cypriot tradition to pin money on the bride and groom at the wedding rather than to give gifts. This is not a tradition practiced in Turkey; it is a Greek and a Cypriot tradition. Tracey is a bride, running

across the translocated terrain of her patrimony. We see a sacrificed lamb, traditionally for the wedding feast. It also calls to mind the murderous father at the heart of Abrahamic religions. There are numerous references in Emin's work to religion, references to Christ and Christianity dominate, although she does make some references to Islam, to angels, and a visit to Konya to Rumi's shrine in *Strangeland*. We see a close up image of Ataturk, whose name means Father of the Turks, founder of the modern Republic of Turkey in 1923, an icon, whose statue is in every town square, whose image is found in every official building and in many homes, shops and restaurants. For some in Turkey today his secularist and militarised modernity is now a devalued currency, for others it is still a compelling rallying image, as compelling as the flag itself. *Sometimes the money is worth more than the dress*. Emin's title makes a factual reference to the status of the Turkish lira, which prior to its devaluation in 2005 when 1 New Turkish Lira equalled a million old Turkish Lira, was the least valuable currency in the world. But we're also invited to wonder whether her Turkish Cypriot legacy is a gift in a defunct currency has no exchange value, does not circulate in an economy, leaving her alone in a displaced desert. The tradition makes no sense. The money is worthless.

For McRobbie 'Emin's concerns are absolutely the same as those which have been at the heart of early second wave feminist art ... however ...there is a displacement and a logic of substitution, which says this is about me, rather than this is because I am a woman' (McRobbie, 2009, p.121).<sup>57</sup> Whilst for McRobbie that personalisation is problematic as an approach to gender, when it comes to exploring diasporal hybrid identities this approach is a source of richness and complexity.

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<sup>57</sup> The history of feminism is often represented as a triadic structure: first wave of feminism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century focused on suffrage and legal equality, the second wave of the 1960s broadened the debate to include the social realm of family life, reproductive rights and the work place and the third wave of feminism questions the essentialist underpinnings of sex and gender (Gamble, 2001).

Diasporal identity is not fixed, it is built out of collective memories and connective social relations and each diasporal story is an individual (family) drama. The tidal waves of demographic charts which chart the mass flows of labour across the globes, the post-war colonised return to the heart of the British empire, the sociological analysis of immigrants and the 'second generation', the discourse of ethnic communities do not capture the particularity of the experience of hybrid identities, where parents are the sole source of originary myth. The fatherland is contained within the father; in Emin's case an absent father. This Cyprus, a diasporic fatherland, is a fragile and impractical construct, rather like Emin's *Knowing My Enemy* installation, an ineffectual shelter built out of the family romance.

### **Leaving the Page**

Writing is central to all these artists, their writing moves off the page, into the materiality of writing as transformed object or projection and the immateriality of writing as performance. Multimedia modes of telling leave the work more open to reinterpretations as narrative coherence is forestalled, even when it is asserted, by the interception of other modes of communication and ways of telling. My early practice proceeded through the production of notebooks and digital archives as recounted in the first chapter of this thesis. My writing exploring the relationship between memory and self-narration developed through multiple forms of writing including (drawing upon their Greek etymology) through the practice of writing with light (photography) and writing with movement (cinematography). The remediation of cultural artefacts, initially of film (as the screen provided the central metaphor for memory I deployed) proceeded through the production of films to represent my memory of remembering cinema, making the collective personal, individual. Between 2006-2009 I developed



my expanded writing practice through the creation of four film collages of twenty minutes duration representing four different kinds of imaginary space: the cinematic space of doubled-memory, of exile, of the city and of the mind itself in *screen/memory* (2006), *Spaces of Exile* (2006), *The Cinematic City* (2007) and *ghost/machine* (2009). Like Laurie Anderson I found performance in academic spaces fruitful, audiences were interested in the topic promised by the abstract, had expectations regarding the mode of presentation and were open, if occasionally sceptical about how poetic performance might fulfil the function of the conventional lecture.

*screen/memory* (2006) splices moments from Makmahlbaf's *Kandahar* (2001), Tarkovsky's *Solaris* (1972), Wong Kar Wei's *2046* (2004), Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958), and Resnais' *L'annee Dernière a Marienbad* (1961). All the films remembered and remediated in this collage make memory and the doubled, fictive and ghostly selves and recollection engenders their central theme. In *Kandahar* it is particularly notable that characters play alter egos related to themselves, a sort of parallel truth, a screen memory. Nilofer Pazira an Afghani –Canadian journalist set out to get to Kabul to find her childhood friend Dyana and inspired Makhmalbaf to make the film (actually shot in Iran) using her as its star. Nafaz both is and isn't Nilofer. A village mullah plays the Taliban mullah, a fatherless boy plays Khak; the black American Islamic convert 'doctor' played by Hassan Tantai, was David Belfield, accused of assassinating a prominent member of SAVAK, the secret police force in 1980 for Khomeini's regime in Washington.

I performed a monologue about my memory of first reading Freud's article in a darkened lecture theatre with the collage as projection as a poetic-academic presentation at *The Technologies of Memory Conference* at Radboud University,

Nijmegen in 2006. The first section of my monologue (reproduced here) gives an indication of how I approached memory by autobiographically interrogating the process of reminiscence.

After I saw the film *Kandahar* by Mohsen Makhmalbaf for the first time in 2001 the colours in the closing scene where a wedding party in burqas is crossing the desert towards Kandahar haunted me. In their multicoloured burqas, not just the light sky blue that I have most frequently seen in news reports but Islamic green, brown and all shades of yellow from khaki through burnt sienna to the colour of primroses, the women looked like strange plants. As the circular narrative ended where it had begun, as Nafaz's burqa is lifted by the Taliban woman shrouded in black and she repeats the lines that opened the film 'I'd always escaped the prisons that held Afghan women; but now I am a captive in every one, only for you my sister', I felt an emptiness in my chest, an implosion of emotion. The feeling that I 'remembered' some 'thing' was 'reminded' of something I had hidden from myself overwhelmed me.

I was at the time writing a series of poems for an imaginary twin, a ghost sister lost to me after the war in Cyprus in 1974 and the film echoed that particular mode of address to an absent sister who must remain outside the narrative, of the relationship between the factual and fictive self.<sup>58</sup> There was also something visual, profoundly cinematic and yet intimately individual in my relation to the film, as though I had stolen someone else's memory, a recollection-image, which embodied the traces of a past event but which had no match in my image repertoire. I resolved, as I walked up the Mall in the premature darkness of a London November afternoon, to reread Freud's paper on screen memory. More than that it felt like a compulsion and so I stopped off at the Waterstone's next to Charing Cross Station and bought the repackaged Penguin Modern Classics edition which also contains his essay on the uncanny and on creative writers and daydreaming.<sup>59</sup> I wasn't sure that the standard volume with the essay was at home, more likely I'd left it at my office in Greenwich. I had to have the essay there and then.

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<sup>58</sup> Adil, Alev (2004) *Venus Inferis* London; NE Publications

<sup>59</sup> Freud, Sigmund, (2003) *The Uncanny* trans. David McLintock, London: Penguin.

And yet it would be over a year before I finally sat down to write about screen memory, and the process of rewriting, of chasing the absent screen memory that haunted me is not yet entirely over. The memories shift like sand dunes, undulate, transform. Inconsistencies emerge. The hawk-eyed reader glancing at an edition of the book will soon notice that the edition I'm reading from here came out two years *after* the November Saturday afternoon when I saw the film, when I remember shopping for the text. Memory is a slippery customer, always willing to tamper with time, to edit and elide events for its own purposes. (*screen/memory* performance script, 2006).

The film collage *screen/memory* went on to become the starting point for the projection in Scene Two of the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*.

*Spaces of Exile*, presented at Bilgi University in Istanbul as part of the 2006 *Crossroads Cultural Studies* Conference, intercut Makhmalbaf's *Kandahar* (2001) and Winterbottom's *Code 46* (2003). The presentation sought to investigate a sense of either literal and/or subjective dissonance using spatial recreation through re-editing to re-present the abject spaces of globalisation: the 'outside' of the transnational. Through these spaces of exile and the films' elegiac mode of address, narrative strategies and mise en scene these films articulate a cinema of transnational mourning. Investigating and displacing my memories of expatriation through other, displaced and imaginary spaces was an attempt, as Bhabha puts it, to take hybridity as the place of departure

I want to take my stand on the shifting margins of cultural displacement - that confounds any profound or 'authentic' sense of a 'national' culture or an 'organic' intellectual - and ask what the function of a committed theoretical perspective might be, once the cultural and historical hybridity of the postcolonial world is taken as the paradigmatic place of departure (Bhabha, 2004, p.18).

The film collage *The Cinematic City* (2007) presented at the ACSIS Cultural Studies Conference, Norrköping University, Linköping in 2007 continued my engagement with *Code 46*, this time edited with Ceylan's *Uzak* (2002) and Akin's *Gegen Die Wand* (2004) in order to explore the imagined cinematic city as a site of multiple (un)belongings and interrogate how notions of identity are displaced and disrupted by geopolitics, by the city and by cinema itself. All three films conjure up subjectivities marked by longing, loneliness and loss. Beyoğlu, both as the site of Istanbul's contemporary cultural regeneration and by unspoken histories repressed by the Republic's official rhetoric of Turkish identity, haunts both Ceylan and Akin's visions of Istanbul. In contrast Akin and Winterbottom's heterotopias of the hotel and the hospital provide possible metaphors for these dislocated global identities. In the performance I gave at the ACSIS Cultural Studies conference at the University of Linköping in Norrköping, Sweden in June 2007 the DVD, a 10-minute re-edit of moments from the three films, was looped around the moment of the crash. The visual accompaniment to my talk moved from the electric spaces of non-places (Auge) via the crash to broken, bloody, biological bodies and then to the Bosphorus, to the flow of water, the stasis of snow; the original narratives fractured and carried away by the currents of my editing into flows of electricity, blood, water. The images take you through internal imagined spaces from the road, through the wall to the water, from the electric city to the breakable body.

In order to understand what the cinematic city might be I wanted to recreate the praxis of 'reading' the films, their space in my imaginary. The praxis of my theoretical approach was to implicitly explore how digital editing has made it more possible to delineate the deconstructive active and creative tactics in our reading of a text and also to evoke my memory of the three films. Refusing the dialectics of

text/audience and suggesting that meaning resides in space created between the two, created by the electricity of the encounter. What the third space created between these two might be, and the nature of third space itself was something I strove to explore through the talk I gave and the film. The talk intended to be praxis in that my method of presentation invited the audience to see the meaning of the presentation as lying not in the words (my voice) or the images but in a third space created between the audience, the experience and myself. This third space resists synthesis, allowing the constituents (the and the spoken words of the written text) to remain separate but also to become something else in the space of interrelation.

Moving from the space of the city and collective spaces of communication I explored the internal space of the mind at the *Screen* Conference, at the University of Glasgow in 2009 where I presented *ghost/machine* a performance/lecture around memory, the mind and the screen. The altered spaces and perceptions of the body and memory of the post-cinematic subject were explored visually through a remediation of Gondry's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004) and Jonze's *Being John Malkovich* (1999). Whilst I did not submit documentation of these performances or of the collages themselves as part of my thesis I have provided a discussion of them because they were an important part of the process of expanded life writing, of moving across modes of communication and exploring peripheral, mobile and labile identities and subjectivities at the intersection between the individual and collective memory, and academic and poetic modes of discursive.

In conclusion whilst the literary antecedents I cite, Hussein, Mahjoub, Ozdamar and Pamuk are prose writers and my book *The Archive of Lost Objects* is primarily poetry, like these writers I use writing to record and understand how the translocated writing subject constantly travels between different realms of fact and fiction. The

autobiographical relay between page, screen, gallery space and stage, performance made through both academic and theatrical contexts can be seen in Anderson's performances, in Hatoum's politically engaged installations, performances and films and through sewing, writing and installations in Emin's work and in Carson's *NOX* through collaborative book making and performative public readings. Expanded life writing is posited a central strategy for archiving the self, if that archive is to foreground the indeterminacy of the self.

## Chapter 4: Memory, Creativity and Schizoanalysis



Having situated the poetics of my drifts through the border zone in the field of life writing and identified or marked out a territory of expanded life writing in the last chapter in this chapter I outline how Freudian psychoanalysis and schizoanalysis (Guattari, 1995) provide inspiration and a methodological framework for my writing, photography and film work on memory and Cyprus.

A close reading of Freud's conceptualisation of memory, particularly Freud's work on memory and his concepts of screen memory and the mystic writing pad was the starting point for my project. Freud undermines the fixity of memory and offers strategies for re-writing what is remembered and provides a descriptive (partly autobiographical and fictionalised) model for the creative process of memory making and self-deconstruction, through projection (the screen memory) and inscription (the mystic writing pad). A genealogy for the use of a Freudian psychoanalytic methodology in art can be traced from the Surrealists and Maya Deren to the contemporary work of artists such as Susan Hiller, Cornelia Parker and Sophie Calle.<sup>60</sup> Positing Freud's essay *Screen Memories* as an ur-text of autoethnographical

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<sup>60</sup> All three artists have held site specific exhibitions at the Freud Museum in London.

writing this chapter considers my creative methodology in relation to a close reading of Freud as the source for the creative strategies deployed in the practice.

The central theoretical and creative framework for this project is Freudian psychoanalytic deconstruction. A psychoanalytical framework for conceptualising memory disrupts the distinctions between, personal/collective/informal/institutional/kinds of memory and between theory/practice. Freud's concept of the screen memory, where he articulates both what technologies of self-remembrance are, and practices them himself within the diegesis of his exposition (he is both analyst and analysand) through a blurring of fiction, autobiography and theory is central to my research. There is an established tradition of artists who have engaged with Freud as a starting point and methodology.

The first artistic movement to explicitly draw on (and resist) Freudian psychoanalysis was the Surrealist movement in the 1920s and 30s (Fer, 1993). Profoundly influenced by Freud's work on the unconscious and dreams (although with an aim to celebrate and mystify the unconscious and the irrational rather than to map it or to 'solve' it) the Surrealists sought to create new modes of experience and creativity that blurred the boundaries between dream and reality. The realistic attitude, according to Breton, 'clearly seems to me to be hostile to any intellectual or moral advancement' (Breton, 1969, p.6). The visual language of cinema in particular, and its techniques: the dissolve, slow motion, superimposition, the close up, the ability to play with the logic of space and time seemed to Breton to correspond to the nature of the dream (Breton, 1969, p.6). In *Un Chien Andalou* (1928) Bunuel<sup>61</sup> and Dali emphasized the dream-like nature of cinema by trying to evade the repression of

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<sup>61</sup> For more on Breton's relationship with Surrealism see Richardson, Michael (2006) 'Luis Bunuel and the Snares of Desire' p.27-44 in Richardson, Michael (2006) *Surrealism and Cinema* Oxford: Berg.



conscious narrative itself (Williams, 1981). The surrealist method of automated writing (*écriture automatique*), a pure mental automatism, writing from a passive state, avoiding narrative and logical restrictions, closely resembles Freud's method of free association.

Maya Deren's film work, particularly *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943), *At Land*, (1944) and *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1946) engage with notions of the Freudian unconscious, and of dream symbolism. In his contemporaneous essay the critic Joseph Brinton (1947) observes that, 'the symbolic picturization of man's subconscious in Deren's experimental films suggest that the subjective camera can explore subtleties of hitherto unimaginable as film content. As the new technique can clearly express almost any facet of everyday human experience, its development should presage a new type of psychological film in which the camera will reveal the human mind, not superficially, but honestly in terms of image and sound ' (Brinton, 1947, p.361). Her work is not simply expressive, it transcends the autobiographical and provides a process of self-analysis in relation to memory. *Meshes of the Afternoon* is set in the everyday intimacy of Deren's home; it stars her and her lover. Her methodological approach is autobiographical but non-confessional. Deren, a film theorist as well as a filmmaker, stated, 'an artist uses his own experience - what other could he use? The fact that it is subjective does not mean personally subjective. For every one of us has a subjective. There is a collective subjective communication of art between those elements common to all people ... the secret that we all share, each privately.' (Deren, 2005, p.208)

Lacan's structuralist interpretation of Freud was a major source of inspiration and critical engagement for feminist artists from the 1970s who wished to explore 'the secret that we all share', the depersonalised or abstracted subjective in art (Mary

Kelly), film (Sally Potter) and theory (Laura Mulvey). The use of writing in Kelly's work, Potter's interweaving of theory, the body and the poetic and Mulvey's parallel attempts to explore film subjectivity through theory and practice are echoed in my work. More recently Calle (1999) has engaged with the roles of detective, criminal and blurring of boundaries between fictive selves in her art using role play methodologies analogous to Freud's self analysis in *Screen Memories*. Parker (1995) has engaged with the both fetishism of the archive, for instance in her works *The Dream Life of Objects* and *Traces left by Freud, Subconsciously* and aftermath of the artefact in her project *Avoided Object*. Hiller's 1994 installation in the Freud museum explores the tension between commemoration and destruction, the object and the memory (Hiller, 1994). As Derrida reminds us, the archive is not the memory itself. 'Because the archive, if this word or this figure can be stabilized so as to take on a signification, will never be either memory or anamnesis as spontaneous, alive and internal experience. On the contrary: the archive takes place at the place of originary and structural breakdown of the said memory' (Derrida, 1995, p.11).

Despite the determinism of his Lacanian incarnation, Freud, or the Freudian Unconscious is reclaimed as a source of inspiration rather than a priest of interpretation. Guattari reminds us that

The Freudian Unconscious has itself evolved in the course of its history: it has lost the seething richness and disquieting atheism of its origins and, in its structuralist version, has been recentred on the analysis of the self, its adaptation to society, and its conformity with a signifying order (Guattari, 1995, p.10).

In order to refuse the universalising binarisms that dominate Freudian psychoanalysis Guattari proposes schizoanalysis, which is

Turned towards actual praxis than towards fixations on, and regressions to, the past. An Unconscious of Flux and of abstract machines rather than an Unconscious of structure and language (Guattari, 1995, p.12).

While psychoanalysis conceptualises psychosis through its visions of neurosis, schizoanalysis approaches all modalities of subjectivation in light of the mode of being in the world of psychosis (Guattari, 1995, p.63).

### **The Screen Memory**

Freud's concepts of the screen memory and of the mystic writing pad have been central inspirations and have determined many of the artistic strategies and choices deployed in this project. Freud's essay *Screen Memories* is the central starting point of my research on memory. My practice has moved back and forth between an analytical interaction with the text: deconstructing Freud's conceptualisations of memory and clarifying his methodology, and a creative one by re-enacting such a conversation/analysis of myself through writing, photography, performance and film-collage. I shall present a close reading of Freud's concepts and then discuss how the essay has provided a creative methodology for my practice-based research.

Freud's brief paper, *Screen Memories* was published in 1899 and served as 'the lyric prelude to the epic symphony of *The Interpretation of Dreams*' published two months later.<sup>62</sup> The German title of the article *Deckerinnerungen* translates literally as 'cover memories' and implicit here is both the sense of remembering, archiving and hiding. Both the sense of cinema screen as a covert way of metaphorising and alluding to repressed collective dreams and the sense of a 'cover story', the lie which the criminal tells in order to disavow the crime are redolent at the intersection of the

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<sup>62</sup> Hugh Haughton's introduction to Freud, Sigmund, (2003) *The Uncanny* trans. David McLintock, London: Penguin, p.xvi. Interestingly while Haughton's musical metaphor seems apt Freud himself does not discuss musical or acoustic contiguity in memory formation or employ musical metaphor himself.

English and German titles of the piece. Freud maps out the development of memory in childhood and outlines his theory of memory by recounting a conversation about childhood memories with an unnamed man. Their discussion of memory refers frequently to a paper by the French psychologists V and C Henri, '*Enquete sur les premiers souvenirs d'enfance*' published in 1897. The Henris' paper is an account of their empirical study containing accounts of childhood memories recounted by the 123 respondents to their questionnaire.

## **Childhood**

For Freud memories are important because there is a constant correlation 'between the psychical significance of an experience and its persistence in the memory' (Freud, 1899). Yet what are we to make of the elliptical and elusive 'indelible traces' left from our childhoods, 'the relatively small number of isolated recollections of questioning or perplexing significance' that we remember from our earliest years, of the 'banal' fragments that assert an hallucinatory visual insistence? All our earliest memories (which usually date from the ages of two to four) are sensorial and fragmentary. Not until the age of six or seven does the child begin to narrativise memories, to produce a coherent chain of events until 'the stream of memory becomes continuous.' These shattered pre-narrative vignettes, Freud contends, are not simply unmediated random 'trace memories' but are screen memories that try to articulate the inarticulable, to breach the borders and mark the lineaments of contested territory in the war between the urge to remember and the compulsion to forget.

Freud contends that screen memories are highly detailed; rich with sensual specificity but seem to evoke only quotidian instances of no easily discernible

consequence. In the Henris' study a Professor of Philology recalls seeing a bowl of ice on a table as a boy aged between three and four. Yet he doesn't remember a far more significant contemporaneous event, the death of his grandmother, which 'shattered' him at the time. Memories of childhood are determined by what preoccupied us then. A little girl in the Henris' study remembers all the names of her dolls but no significant family events from that time. Freud contends that these happenstance 'trace-memories' are often contemporaneous with, and speak of, events that profoundly affected us at that time and are also edited and narrativised to make connections with, and metaphorise later events. Freud differentiates between memory images concerning events which parents have recounted to the child, memory images of events the subject claims not to have been informed about and events they couldn't have been told about. In the first two cases we cannot know whether the image precedes the parental narrative or is inspired by it. The last example seems the purest but these memories too, can never be taken as simple found objects, as trace memories too are subject to substitution and falsification, and may well be screen memories themselves.

### **Forgetting**

The significance of the screen memory resides precisely in that which is not seen, that which is not shown, but is alluded to. The memory both refers to and suppresses what is significant. The urge to remember and the force of resistance, which wants to forget, do not cancel each other out but reach a compromise. A woman in the Henris' study remembers reading Otto Ludwig's *Heiterethei* and clearly recalls 'trivial and irrelevant' passages from the book and edits out the elements of the narrative that she finds traumatic. The compulsion to forget ensures that the event is

not represented in the memory and the compulsion to memorialise supplies a memory image of a closely associated, displaced, psychical event. There are visual, sensory and linguistic contiguities at play in this process. We are invited to analyse these fragments, to read from them ‘an suspected wealth of meaning usually hidden behind their apparent harmlessness.’ The screen memory owes its value not to intrinsic content but that content’s relation to absent, inarticulable, suppressed content.

The screen memory calls us insistently, shines like gold, but ‘this is not because it is golden but because it has lain beside gold.’ The colour yellow is woven throughout Freud’s evocatively visual essay. The central screen memory at the heart of the essay is the puzzling childhood reminiscence of Freud’s patient. Not a pathological case, he is ‘not neurotic, or only very slightly so.’ This is significant, both because Freud is here making clear that his theory of the screen memory makes no distinction between the normal and the pathological process of memory formation, and because the reader (this reader at any rate) becomes engaged by two hermeneutic enigmas. What is the meaning of the man’s screen memory? Who is this man and what is his relationship to Freud if he is not a patient? Freud and this university educated thirty-eight year old man ‘who has maintained an interest in psychological questions – though they are remote from his professional concerns’ converse easily and intimately as equals though the latter offers no contradictory or resistant discourse and is content to let Freud have the last (interpretive) word in the analysis. Is Freud a friend, private detective or analyst here? Most of all he is the interpreter, editor and final author who unravels the displaced tangles and shards of memory and weaves a coherent story out of them, produces a closed text out of the fragments. In doing he so also undermines the distinction between screen memory, trace memory and fantasy and thus remembering and invention, autobiography and fiction. There is something

suppressed in the meta-narrative of Freud and his patient just as there is in the patient's screen memory. The very namelessness of the man speaks of an omission from the narrative, the screen memory of essay.

### **Memory of a Darker Shade**

But first let's look at Freud's reading of the unnamed man's memory:<sup>63</sup> this inconsequential but insistent childhood memory consisting of a longish pastoral scene and several still images begun thus: 'I see a square, rather steeply sloping meadow, very green and lush; among the greenery there are lots of yellow flowers, clearly common dandelions' and three young children playing in a meadow as the nursemaid and a farmer's wife watch over them. Freud connects the yellow of the flowers to a later memory concerning a teenage infatuation: 'Don't you suspect a connection between the yellow of the girl's dress and the excessively bright yellow of the flowers in your childhood scene?' Freud asks. The analysand follows the colour through 'an intermediate idea' to the memory of a darker hued flower, a flower he'd seen on an Alpine ramble as an abstemious university student, whose colour corresponded exactly to the girl's dress.

Shades of yellow provide contiguity between the single memory-image and events that occurred long after, at the age of seventeen and then at twenty. Memory paints a connection between the bright, common yellow dandelion of his golden childhood at the age of three, before the family lost their fortune and moved to another town; his unrequited teenage love's darker yellow dress and an alpine flower of the self-same shade at high altitudes on a solitary walking holiday. All three speak of regret at the loss of childhood plenitude. The darker yellow alludes to the

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<sup>63</sup> The essay is very visual, I'm inviting the reader to experience the essay cinematic, as a filmic day dream.

prosperous family friend's daughter whom he desired, the lighter yellow both to his childhood and to the female cousin in the memory. His father and uncle later tried to arrange a marriage between them but the unnamed man both lacked desire for the girl and for having to abandon his esoteric studies for a more vocational degree. There is now a sense of regret, that he did not marry the object of his desire and that could not desire his cousin as he had the daughter of the family friend.

This screen memory operates on the level of linguistic metaphor and punning as well as visual allusion. The children are picking dandelions. The girl has the best bunch and both boys 'fall upon her and snatch the flowers away.' The man 'deflowers' the rich cousin he ought to have married, and displaces his (higher) desire for the other girl (the darker alpine yellow flower) onto the common yellow flower of the plain (his cousin).<sup>64</sup> The farmer's wife consoles her with a big slice of delicious black bread, which she cuts from the loaf with a long knife. This bread represents both the (delicious) material comfort he would have gained through the alliance and the 'bread and butter' studies he would have had to pursue as a condition of that alliance. Two desires are suppressed in the yellow screen memory – his desire for material comfort (bread) and his desire for a lost girl (the flowers).

### **The Memory as a Work of Art**

Freud's analysis conceptualises memory not merely as an archive or data base of trace memories – raw data, but as a crafted object that is a work of art rather than a found object.<sup>65</sup> The editing strategies of the unconscious provide many technologies

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<sup>64</sup> The interpretation of altitude as a metaphor around desire is my own and not explicitly observed in Freud's essay.

<sup>65</sup> 'Art can be viewed as parallel to memory. Many of the same terms are used to describe the two. For example: art and memory both employ and integrate the senses, both are representations, and both refer to a sense of timelessness. Art can evoke memory and vice versa. ... There are many aspects of memory that, like art, are not quantifiable.' (Polli, 1999, p.47)



of falsification. If memory is an archive, then it is one that is constantly threatened by destruction, subject to change through new additions and contexts (Merewether, 2006). Events are transferred to a place they didn't occur. Two people are merged into one or one is substituted for another. Two separate experiences are combined. Psychic technologies analogous to those used in filmmaking, are used in reminiscence. The memory is edited; a psychic suture is inherent in the act of remembering. The screen of the memory serves to (incompletely or problematically) repress and omit the objectionable. Memory does not emerge it is formed. When considering the technologies and strategies we might use to represent memory we are faced with the indivisibility of the technologies of representation and of memory- formation itself. Whether through mediated practice or through private reveries we create an archive (fragments of memories) to generate screen memories/ narratives; use visual, acoustic, linguistic and melodic metaphors as contiguities to elude closure and allude to indeterminate un-articulations; explore the processes that determine what we exclude/ edit out and what we present as documentary or choose to fictionalise. Both the memory and the representation of memory are crafted objects open to interpretation, both have the power to deconstruct and disturb historical and personal narratives as much as to confirm them. The screen is not only a cover but just as it is in the cinema it is a plane of projection. 'You projected two fantasies onto one another and turned them into a childhood memory', Freud tells the analysand. We are the projectors as well as the directors, editors and audience in the cinema of memory. Perhaps Freud's concept of screen memory is compelling as a framework for generating creative practice around memory and for destabilising and deconstructing

memory and challenging postmemory<sup>66</sup> precisely *because* his interpretation of the screen memory refuses closure, the secure finality of a definitive interpretation which he promises.

The screen memory is not only a shroud over a hidden object (subject) it is a process of allusion, a stream of metaphors which provide a contiguity to the zone of the inarticulable. The inarticulable shifts: there is no single unsayable; we are cast into a zone of indeterminacy, an imaginary cinema where we are both projector and sole member of the audience. His theory of memory provides us with a fruitful space in which to explore the relationship between the work of art and memory, the relationship between archival and narrative strategies of subject formation. Memory is a crafted artefact. There can be no distinction between the innocent or authentic trace memory and the screen memory: the readymade (trace memory) is robbed of its innocence when placed in the screen memory gallery. Juxtaposition, allusion, interpretation, context render it metaphorical and fictional: art. Memory time is not chronological; the trace memory from childhood is constantly refashioned, ‘translated back into a plastic and visual form at a later date, the date which the memory was aroused.’ The distinction between trace memory and screen memory becomes not merely permeable but indistinguishable – Freud does not merely question the veracity of memory but emphasises its capacious ability to incorporate subsequent events (as well as subsequent interpretations) within its diagetic. It is still open to question whether we have any conscious memories *from* childhood, we can only be certain that we have memories *of* childhood.

Whether we are entirely convinced by or satisfied with Freud’s analysis of the

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<sup>66</sup> ‘Postmemory describes the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right’ (Hirsch, 2008).

memory is open to question. There is an excess, a residue here. Where does the interpretation stop? ‘What of the knife?’ I ask, remembering the nursery rhyme ...three blind mice... cut off their tails with a carving knife... There is no reference to music in the essay although it serves as a strategy for allusive contiguity as much as the visual, linguistic and sensual triggers of memory. A melody can be a Madeleine too. The metaphors Freud uses in the essay: the fragment of memory shatters, the bowl of ice becomes a continuous stream of memory, provides an aqueous undertow to the unnamed man’s sunny screen memory. Somewhere a woman reads a book whose pages turn to snow, whole passages blizzarded by forgetting, another woman is remembering herself as a little girl and recalling all the names of her dolls, while in a book lined room at Berggasse 19 Freud converses with the nameless man.

### **The Doubled Self of Memory**

The dream-like space of Freud’s study contains two figures, a story within a story and fact within a fictive frame. The parallels between Freud’s biography and his nameless analysand’s narrative are striking.<sup>67</sup> Both suffered downward mobility and loss of an idyllic infancy in a provincial town, both have suffered unrequited love; both are driven by intellectual curiosity and have had professional success. Born in rural Freiburg, Freud’s family moved to Vienna when he was three. Freud had lifelong attachment to his birthplace. In 1931, unable to attend the unveiling of a plaque in his honour because of ill health, Freud wrote: ‘At seventy-five it is not easy for me to put myself back into those early times; of their rich experiences but few relics remain in my memory. But of one thing I can feel sure: deeply buried within me there still lives the happy child of Freiberg, the first-born son of a youthful mother,

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<sup>67</sup> I came to this conclusion through my own ‘detective work’. Later I was to discover it was first identified as such by S. Bernfeld (Bernfeld, 1947: 3-19).

who received his first indelible impressions from this air, from this soil' (Freud, 1931, p.259). His teenage crush or 'calf love' for Gisela Fluss, the daughter of family friends in Freiburg is documented in his adolescent letters to Eduard Silberstein (Boehlich).

These parallels are significant because they seem to indicate that rather than an account of the analysis of another, Freud may be undertaking a self-analysis. His biography points to other possible interpretations of elements (the nursemaid, the knife) of the screen memory which are missing from his account, - that he might have suppressed his infantile grief at the death of his nursemaid, for instance. His rather fervent adolescent admiration for, and attachment to, Gisela's mother is entirely absent from this memory too.

My intention here is not to undermine Freud's (self) analysis and hence his concept of screen memory but to underline how the fluidity of such self-analysis is inherent in every act of recollection.<sup>68</sup> The underlying grammar of the screen memory operates within both the fictive and autobiographical elements of the essay. It is the grammar of the conditional clause, protasis, and its consequence, apodosis that underlies the memory. 'The clause that has remained unconscious seeks to transform itself into a childhood scene' (Freud, 1931, p.259).<sup>69</sup> *If* Freud had stayed in Freiburg *then* he would have married Gisela. If Freud had stayed in Freiburg then he would have married Gisela and become a contented country gentleman. Other conditional clauses are perhaps implicit but not articulated: if my cousin had been Gisela then I would have desired her; and if Gisela had been her mother I would have desired her

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<sup>68</sup> Freud wrote that the memory illustrated the most momentous turning points of his life (Freud, 1899: 316). Perhaps I was drawn to the essay because Freud's memories mark a present tense sense of exile being expressed through memories of former losses. Smith notes that 'It seems that Freud's catastrophic loss of his childhood home in the country, was re-evoked on each occasion' (Smith, 2000 p23).

<sup>69</sup> The 'if... then' structure of this screen memory is familiar to us from the surrealist game of si-quand.

more. The most mysterious protasis is enacted through the figure of the alter ego in the text: 'if I was nearly, but not quite myself, then I would be...'.

If we read the article itself as a screen memory then the central fact that is metaphorised yet never explicitly articulated is Freud's doubled relationship to his (imaginary) patient. The doubling of multiplied selves, of Freud as analyst and Freud as analysand presents us with a protasis and apodosis of possible selves. We are always divided from the self we see in memory, and any detective work around the identity of that alter ego inevitably alters the ego. The analysis is never complete, the 'meaning' of the memory never fixed. There can be no Final Interpretation to uncover; it will have to be read against all the other analyses created by prior, and subsequent, selves. Whereas the promised pleasures of the detective genre in film and fiction (and of psychoanalysis) speak of a fantasy of order, that the criminal will be apprehended; that the Law of the Father will be reinstituted; the mystery will be solved, Freud's detective work here speaks from a more culpable position. Rather than a forbidding 'priest of interpretation' who is at hand every time 'desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1998, p.154), in *Screen Memories* Freud presents us with the psychoanalyst as far more ambiguous, playful, figure. For while Freud as analyst/ detective 'solves' the murder (that which has been exiled from articulation), he is also the analysand/ criminal covering his tracks. The detective is closely related to the assassin. The urge to remember and the compulsion to forget are locked in complicity. They are all part of the same haunted clan: the detective, the analyst, the archivist, the academic, the assassin - all searching for clues, tampering with the evidence, hoping for a conclusion that does not come. Meaning (and thus identity) is repeated, transformed, destabilised and deferred through memory, and the materiality of the memory practice

is central to the mode of subjectivity that will be produced by it. The meaning of the memory, its repressed, 'screened' absent object seems like a desubstantiation of memory, a projection of colour in 'Screen Memories'.

### **The Mystic Writing Pad as an Archive**

Freud's account of the process of memory is far less visual and phonocentric (the analysis is process of verbal dialogue, oral story telling), far more material (and grounded in the act of writing) in his essay, 'A Note Upon the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' (Freud, 1925 p.225-232). The mystic writing pad was a child's toy consisting of a transparent film over a wax board where any inscription that leaves an indentation in the wax leaves a trace on the film. When the film or screen is lifted the trace disappears, cleaning the surface of all marks, like a blackboard being cleaned. Yet the pliable surface beneath the cellophane page tells a different story. For Freud permanent ways of recording memory, like writing on the page are too finite a metaphor for memory. The page becomes full, difference and forgetting through repetition becomes impossible. The alternative metaphor of the blackboard is too infinitely receptive to allow for the returned of the repressed. The mystic writing pad both allows for the surface illusion of newness (of the blackboard, of the slate wiped clean) and leaves marks in the wax layer, as unconscious memory, beneath the surface of the page, which is a palimpsest of inscriptions, of partially erased and often illegible traces. 'The appearance and disappearance of the writing' is similar to 'the flickering-up and passing-away of consciousness in the process of perception' (Freud, 1925, p.230).

The (un)translatability of the subconscious brings us face to face with 'the repression and enigma of presence' (Derrida, 1997, p.197). 'Translation, a system of

translation, is possible only if a permanent code allows a substitution our transformation of signifiers while retaining the same signified, always present, despite the absence of any specific signifier. This fundamental possibility of substitution would thus be implied by the coupled concepts signified/signifier, and would consequently be implied by the concept of the sign itself. Even if, along with Saussure, we envisage the distinction between the signified and the signifier only as the two sides of a sheet of paper, nothing is changed. 'Originary writing, if there is one, must produce the space and the materiality of the sheet itself' (Derrida, 1997, p.210). In 'Freud and the Scene of Writing,' Derrida concludes that the mystic writing pad is not a metaphor, but that perception is a kind of writing machine, like the mystic writing pad. We apprehend the world retrospectively rather than directly. Our sense of both the self and the world is the product of previous memories, previous writings. We can only ever experience the world after the fact, through the traces of previous experiences. 'Writing supplements perception before perception even appears to itself' (Derrida, 1997, p.224). The technology of writing makes apparent the 'before' of perception and determines the 'after' of memory. 'What is at issue here is nothing less than the *future*, if there is such a thing: the future of psychoanalysis in its relation to the future of science. As techno-science, science in its very movement, can only consist in a transformation of the techniques of archiving, of printing, of inscription, of reproduction, of formalisation, of ciphering, and of translating marks' (Derrida, 1995, p.15). For Derrida the archive produces the events it records, and technology becomes an extension of subjectivity (Derrida, 1997, p.127).

This means that, *in the past*, psychoanalysis would not have been what it was (any more than so many other things) if E-mail, for example had existed...For the example of the E-mail is privileged in my opinion for a more important and obvious reasons: because electronic mail today, even more than the fax, is on

the way to transforming the entire public and private space of humanity, and first of all the limit between the private, the secret (private or public), and the public or the phenomenal (Derrida, 1997, p.17).

The private and collective archive moves from private to public<sup>70</sup> according to both social context and medium of preservation. Not only does the medium determine the archive, it determines the memory experience.

Yet the anxiety of ruin, of dissolution, incompleteness, and destruction always haunts the archive. More than that, there is no archive. Steadman echoes Derrida, 'no storehouse, especially not the psychoanalytic archive of the human psyche, holds the records of an original experience to which we may return but nevertheless psychoanalysis is driven by the desire to find the origin, the 'thing': memory, desire, trait, originates, attempts to delineate the mechanisms and rules of regimes of representation and of repetition visited on the 'original' unmediated, absent, irrecoverable archive of memory. Whilst Freud is explicit in stating that the archive is irrecoverable he is also mourning its loss' (Steadman, 2001, p.7). Derrida reminds us that the archive is a promise, 'the archive has always been a *pledge*, and like every pledge (*gage*), a token of the future. To put it more trivially, what is no longer archived in the same way is no longer lived in the same way' (Derrida, 1995, p.18).

### **'Screen Memories' as an Autoethnographic Methodology**

My project uses my memories, with an emphasis on memories up to the age of six (when memory begins to become narrativised according to Freud), as my source of inspiration and object of enquiry. This places my work in the tradition of female artists who use their lives as material and create doubled selves and alter egos in the

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<sup>70</sup> Derrida uses the example of Freud's last home.



tradition of Claude Cahun, Charlotte Saloman, Frida Kahlo, Sophie Calle and Tracey Emin. My work does not use Freud to psychologise my autobiography, but rather in the Surrealist tradition attempts to discern and unleash the subconscious in the process and to destabilise the coherent self. Instead my creative research explores the double nature of autobiographical memory, where the self is doubled as remembering subject and remembered object.

### **Appropriating the Archive**

Researching a subject and remembering, here there is no distinction between academic and personal reminiscence, remembering proceeds through a conversation with an archive whether it be an imaginary reverie, official archive or a family photo album and through reappropriating, speaking back and through the creation of an archive of one's own. Interrogation becomes an act of creation. Freud emphasises the crafted nature of memories. I chose two key objects to craft memories from: Ahmet Cem's home movie footage from my childhood and my great-grandfather Imam Mustafa Nuri's prison notebooks as talismanic and fundamental objects for the project and used them as ways to investigate the nature of the archive and memory visually. They appear in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* performance, in the book *The Archive of Lost Objects* and on the website and digital archive *MemoryMap*. Freud's essay becomes a starting point for exploring how memory is crafted and mediated, the specificity of media and the memories they evoke. I wrote both autobiographical poetry and prose and critical essays or fragments in order to explore my memory and the nature of memory itself. I also produced *écriture automatique* in the Surrealist tradition by designing and then deploying a digital poem generator.<sup>71</sup> This textual

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<sup>71</sup> Discussed in Chapter 2 p.59-60.

activity was accompanied by a non-linguistic engagement with the film footage and copies of the notebook, a visual interrogation of artefacts as memory. Collage enabled me to appropriate diverse images, moments from film, literary styles, and music<sup>72</sup> and to juxtapose them and to bring them together. I also carried out a conversation with key film texts through reappropriations of films whose aesthetic and thematic qualities enabled me to explore the nature of memory and my own story.<sup>73</sup>



Figure 10. Ahmet Cem radio journalist and amateur filmmaker, 2011 by Alev Adil

I was given home movie footage from the 1960s, some of it of my childhood shot by amateur filmmaker Ahmet Cem. I have very close ties with the Cem family and Ahmet and Mualla's son Hakan was my first childhood friend,<sup>74</sup> therefore the film had great emotional resonance for me. I was given the footage in the form of both video and DVD. Both versions were of corrupted quality, and re-represented the original super8 footage in different ways. I was drawn to the changes wrought by

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<sup>72</sup> I worked closely with the composer Stephen Kennedy who sampled songs with autobiographical significance for me (Aphrodite's Child *End of the World*, Ajda Pekkan *Tanrı Misafiri* and The Carpenters *Yesterday Once More*) when composing the music for the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*.

<sup>73</sup> The choice of Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, Tarkovsky's *Solaris*, Makhmalbaf's *Kandahar* and Wong Kar Wei's *2046* is discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>74</sup> Hakan Cem is also a published poet. He lives and is published in Turkey.

translations and copying and also to Ahmet Cem's poetic double exposures.

The home movie footage has a very uncanny quality. Conventional records of happy family meals and beach outings, with much playacting<sup>75</sup> are interspersed with footage from the 1963 conflict. The militarised and hysterical nature of life in the years that follow is seen in footage filmed at school and other parades. I made a ten-minute film from this footage intercut with footage I shot in Kastro, Sifnos in 2006, which became the projection for 'The Time Machine', the first act/scene of my performance. In addition to the Situationist drift, collage in a variety of media enabled me to explore conscious and unconscious meanings around memory, poetry and identity arising out of the processes of erasure, reinscription, translation and fragmentation.

I edited and intercut the home movie footage and films, and then experimented with projecting these sequences (in order to literalise Freud's metaphor of the screen memory) on to a variety of objects<sup>76</sup> as an obscured and unstable, often unreadable palimpsest.<sup>77</sup> The juxtaposition of image, text and object in performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*<sup>78</sup> plays with time and space by appropriating diverse symbolic objects: the suit case, the television, the washing line and discourses (mythic, poetics, popular) in order to weave together synesthetic memory environments produced from writing, drawing, collaging, filming, photographing, reading, performing without losing the

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<sup>75</sup> Mualla Cem was a renowned actress in the Turkish Cypriot State Theatre.

<sup>76</sup> I collaborated with the theatrical director Nuno Salihbegovic, who enabled me to coordinate my collage of music, recorded voice, film and still images for *Memory in the Dead Zone* using the programme *Isadora*.

<sup>77</sup> Shirin Neshat's work *Women of Allah* came to mind after I had produced these images, although they were not a conscious starting point (Danto, 2010).

<sup>78</sup> Documentation for the first performance at Side Streets Cultural Centre in Nicosia, Cyprus 1.04.2011 is provided in DVD *Memory in the Dead Zone*. Further documentation for this performance can be seen on the website element of this project, at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/performing-memory-dead-zone>. A preliminary performance of the first section of the performance at the University of Greenwich Cross Genre experimental poetry conference can be seen at <http://vimeo.com/17113843#at=0> and <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/time-machine>.

sense that this is an assemblage, not a unified whole, that each has a media specificity and is its own embodied experience. The spatial strategies of Kutlug Ataman in his installation *Kuba* (2006) provided useful methodological insights into re-presenting and re-staging an archive.

### **An Architecture of Forgetting: journeys in the dead zone**

Midway into my research in 2009, I wanted to explore how I could inhabit, perform and animate the archive I was producing in the form of screen memories. I had been exploring this by developing PowerPoint presentations like *something to do with the colour yellow* (2006) of images. The process was reminiscent of my childhood engagement with the View Master toy. I developed writing in conjunction with certain images, and experimented with presenting them as text and black and white photograph in book form and in parallel to this practice by exploring the effect produced by the juxtaposition of voice rather than text, accompanied by a slide show. I archived part of this research process in my DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting: journeys in the dead zone*, which consists of six short film-poems (*Hotel Amnesia*, *My Favourite Dream*, *The Ruined Cinema*, *A Small Forgotten War*, *Memory and The Impossibility of Fidelity* and *The Names of All Her Dolls*) between three and five minutes in length, and four silent photo slide shows, *A Calendar of Empty Beds*, *Dead Zone*, *Fugitive Itineraries* and *Havana/Nicosia* and weaves together the discursive practices of poetry, memoir and academic writing in the spoken voice over which accompanies a slide show of images. The film-poems from the DVD were screened in London gallery environments with headphones and small monitors, *Hotel Amnesia* at the PM Gallery 2007, *Small Forgotten War* at the Stephen Lawrence Borders and Identities exhibition in 2008.

The images are repetitive and the slideshow provides a 'flat' format that refuses the spectacular and the emotive. I decided on the slideshow format after using PowerPoint as a visual medium in a series of performances in both conference and gallery settings. I was drawn to use PowerPoint in a way that undermined the corporate and pedagogic uses it is customarily used for, an act of subverting academic discourse through software, and also because it can be used to evoke the nostalgia of slide projection. The viewer of the DVD finds themselves in a border zone between autobiographical memory (as expressed through voice rather than text where 'presence is at once promised and refused' (Derrida, 1976 p.14), my voice recounting the disjuncture of travel, a walk along and through the border in Nicosia in 2006, bereavement, and the theorisation of memory.

The slippage between autobiographical, poetic and academic registers leave the viewer in a no man's land between intimacy and intellectual engagement, entertainment and boredom. The clash of stylistic (and conceptual) conventions in my voice-over allows the 'wrong' voice of poetry, a fugitive and an exile from outside the conventions of academic discourse into the text, whilst theory interrupts and interrogates the lyrical and emotional subject. The repetition and transformation of images both indicates how difference arises out of repetition (Deleuze, 1994 p.18) and invites the viewer to make connections (which are implied rather than being illustratively straightforward) between the photographs and the fragments of narrative. The aspect of repetition also makes the process of remembering a conscious part of the viewing process - the viewer remembers having seen the image before, their 'memory' of the image distanciates them from emotional engagement with the auditory memory narratives.

The silent slideshows echo, and provide non-linguistic representations of

aspects of the film-poems. *A Calendar of Empty Beds* and *Fugitive Itineraries* both explore the transience and rootlessness explored in *Hotel Amnesia*; whilst *Dead Zone* provides a chronological sequence of images from a walk taken in 2006 along the border in the north of Nicosia, through the Ledra Palace checkpoint to the south, and back again. This sequence is a record of a private journey, most of the photos taken covertly and without official permission in zones where photography is prohibited.<sup>79</sup> *Havana/Nicosia* is a photo essay comparing the psychogeographies of international isolation and economic embargo in the very different context of Havana and Nicosia.

The prose poem voiceovers that feature in *An Architecture of Forgetting* cover the same emotional and geographical terrain as the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* yet the media and context of consumption are crucial to the contrasting experience and the echoing but differing meanings produced by both. In the DVD I seek to create an imaginative space where the emotional and the analytic are in creative tension and neither the academic nor the poetic voice is clearly dominant, which interrogates the ‘auto’ of autoethnography, (the presumed ‘authenticity’ of my memories) as much as it does the ‘ethnography’ (the academic articulations of the ‘objective truth’ of Cypriot history and memory).

The forbidden zone or border between poetry and academic writing frustrates both the viewer’s desire to submit passively to the fiction of the piece (to be entertained) or to achieve intellectual certitude. The discomfort produced: boredom for those who seek spectacle and frustration for those who seek certainty is central to these film-poems or photo-essays.

In conclusion, in this chapter I have examined how Freud’s work has served as

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<sup>79</sup> This is contrast to the work of Jim Harold (discussed in Chapter 6) whose images of the border are obtained with official UN permission and escort. My photos inhabit the position of the private citizen without calling on the privileges of the artist or expert.

an inspiration to artists from the Surrealists to contemporary practice and how *Screen Memories* serves as the foundational text for the entirety of this thesis in all its creative and academic iterations. Through Freud we can locate the sensory self-fictionalization, multiplication, and mobile, transitive modes of communication deployed by expanded writing in the memory process itself. His description of the way in which memory operates provides the framework for understanding how self-narration and performance are an indissoluble part of memory. Each enactment transforms the memory itself.

## Chapter 5: Performing the Poetics of Identity



In the last chapter I described how and why I employed Freud's conceptualisation of screen memory as inspiration for the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting*. In this chapter I move from the individual moment of recollection which Freud places centre stage in order to situate my practice in the terrain of the collective memories that accrue to the border zone of literary canons in Cyprus and explore Greek and Turkish Cypriot poetics, Cypriot poetry in English and the translocatory and transformative literary criticism and theoretical essays of the poets and theorists Stephanos Stephanides and Mehmet Yashin, which offer new genealogies and spaces for Cypriot literary identity. I deploy the concept of translocation in order to explore the movement between times of memory, places of exile and emigration, different languages, media and cultural contexts and between theory and practice as a series of relays. My site specific performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* performed in various iterations between 2010-2012 is discussed in this context.

### The Poetics of Identity

Language, literature and translation have played a crucial, often destructive, part in the formation of post-colonial Cypriot identities (Killoran, 1994; Kouvialis, 1981).



Poetry has played an important part in Cypriot culture and has played an explicitly politicised role in the formation of collective Cypriot memory. Poetry is the dominant genre of published works by Turkish Cypriots, and the dominant genre for competitions in school, and in newspapers (Killoran, 1994, p.166).

The nationalist political struggles of both communities from the 1950s onwards have produced their own poets and poetics. The Greek Cypriot EOKA violent anti-colonialist campaigns of the 1950s espoused the notion of Enosis, union with Greece. This sense of national identity was fostered by the institutions of the Greek Orthodox Church and by the education system. Hellenic ideology gave the Greek Cypriots an idealistic vision, the *Megalo* idea - literally the Big Idea of a greater Greece.<sup>80</sup> The Turkish Cypriot leadership responded to Enosis with the concept of Taksim, union with Turkey (Hitchens, 2002). As the agrarian base that had maintained Cypriots' cultural similarities (or sense of parallel equilibrium and respect at least) was eroded away and cultural otherness was emphasised and constructed as part of both communities' political agendas.

This cultural divorce, which was a symptom of a changing social situation, was then manipulated to hasten political change; and to bring about an independence reliant on Greece, Turkey and Britain, in terms of social identity as well as politically. The education systems (Greek, Turkish and British) and the literatures they promoted, the canons Greek and Turkish Cypriot culture constructed, were instrumental in the formation of post independence identity. These canons became weapons of war, since the canon not only represents national identity but also participates in its production

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<sup>80</sup> This Greek expansionism in Asia Minor was entitled by the 'Great Idea' by Prime Minister of Greece in 1922. It was a cultural, political and ultimately a military project of integrating these regions into the Greek state in accordance to the triptych of religion, culture and language. The 'Great Idea' as Triantafyllidou and Veikou (2002) indicate was instrumental for the transformation and unification of a traditionally divided society into a nation-state. Consequently, the Greek nation state projected itself as the national and cultural epicentre for the Greek peoples living in the Balkans, the Near and the Middle East.

by instilling in people the values of nationalism (Jusdanis, 1991; Ramm, 2006).

Ignoring the shared culture of everyday life Greek and Turkish Cypriot poetry in the 1950s and beyond articulated literary connections to Greece and Turkey, the respective motherlands of the two communities, and their political agendas, and served to separate the two communities. Mustafa Adiloglu, a poet active from the early 1950s observes,

British Colonial education had played an interesting, but under explored, role in the formation of Turkish Cypriot identities. When the island became a Crown colony after three and a half centuries of Ottoman rule, British culture began making inroads into local cultures just as the Ottoman Turkish culture did through their institutions and administrations. Briefly, a Turkish culture different from that of mainland Turkey evolved in Cyprus (Kizilyurek and Naldoven, 1990, p.17).

Writing is a way of defending and asserting aspects of one's identity that seem contested or controversial. Cypriot poets of the 1950s and 1960s chose to transcribe the Turkish and Greek aspects of their Cypriotness not because they were more real but precisely because they seemed more threatened by British Colonialism for Greek Cypriots and by Greek nationalism for Turkish Cypriots. Just as Turkish Cypriot poets today emphasise their Cypriotness precisely because that is the threatened aspect of their national identity in the face of globalisation and the domination of Turkish media and mass culture. Adiloglu recalls, 'The greatest threat to our community, for our cultural heritage came, at the time, from the Greek Cypriot community and its declared and cherished goals. The latest search by young Turkish Cypriot writers and poets for a Turkish *Cypriot* identity may have been triggered off by the realisation that the threat to our separate Turkish Cypriot culture now has a different source' (Kizilyurek and Naldoven, 1990, p.17).

The Cypriot poets of the 1950s and 1960s wrote, not in their Turkish/ Greek Cypriot dialects, but in the received accent and vocabulary of the respective mainland. They looked to literary publications in Greece and Turkey for validation. Turkish Cypriot poetry published by that generation was predominantly engaged by war and national identity.<sup>81</sup> Their writing, whatever its thematic conformity, had a declamatory, hyperbolic, romantic, quality. Often their poetry also expressed a sensuous and visceral politics of patriarchy, a private love that the public struggle was fought for. The metaphor of motherlands and mother tongues that were everyday phrases gave the male poet feminine, biologised topoi through which to narrativise and justify their *Turkish* Cypriot identity. This is further complicated by the fact that to have Turkish as a mother tongue is to be heir to a literary legacy that on the mainland too, has been shaped to engender a new national identity. Atatürk's revolution changed the alphabet from Arabic to Latin, in a bid to occidentalise the language, excising the Persian and Arabic vocabulary and distancing itself from literature of the Ottoman court. In many ways this modernisation of the language gave literature a renewed vigour but the liberty engendered by such literary amnesia is short-lived, in the long run forgetting exacts its unnameable price. For the generations of Turks and Turkish Cypriots educated after the 1923 Kemalist revolution, their entire heritage must read in translation.<sup>82</sup>

Greek and Turkish Cypriot poetry in the era of transition from colonial rule to the new Republic of the 1960s articulated literary connections to Greece and Turkey,

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<sup>81</sup> An example of such a publication would be Ersavas, Fahri (ed.) (1954) *Kıbrıs Şiirleri Antolojisi*, Istanbul: Yagmur Yayın Evi which translates as The Cypriot Poetry Anthology and features a soldier, an outline of Cyprus and a Turkish flag on the cover.

<sup>82</sup> Ottoman literatures produced many hybrid and now defunct conjunctions of alphabets and languages, including Karamanlis, Turkish written using the Greek alphabet, which was used principally by the Christian Orthodox Turkish speaking peoples of Cappadocia. In contrast Greek speaking Muslims of the Ottoman era often wrote Greek in Ottoman script. The first Turkish language novel of the Ottoman era, *Akabi* (1851) by Vartan Pasha was written in Turkish using Armenian script.

the respective motherlands of the two communities and their political agendas, and served to separate the two communities.<sup>83</sup> Turkish Cypriot poetry after 1974 is marked by a changing political emphasis, by attempts to forge a new Cypriot identity which does not look mainly to Turkey as its audience and literary ‘home’ (Yilmaz, 2009, p.21). The Turkish Cypriot poets who emerged after 1974, Mehmet Yashin and Neshe Yashin, Rashit Pertev and Hakki Yucel for example, explored and questioned national identity and moved towards narratives of fragmentation and plurality. Contemporary Turkish Cypriot poetry in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries has taken a more sensuous turn whilst continuing to explore the corporeal and geographical ground of Cypriotness in the work of Turkish Cypriot poets like Gur Genc, Filiz Naldoven, Faize Ozdemirciler, Jenan Selcuk and Ridvan Arifoglu (Yilmaz, 2009, p.156- 167).

Contemporary Turkish Cypriot poetry is marked by a changing political emphasis, by attempts to forge a Turkish *Cypriot* identity (Kizilyurek, 1990; Yashin, 2000). Recent Turkish Cypriot writing has explored and questioned national identity through both poetic practice and literary theory. More than postmodern literary strategy the problematisation of fixed identity, of the reliability of the narrator, the collapse of meta-narratives, the margins are reflections of lived experience for Turkish Cypriot writers today. However, ironically, they still find themselves writing in relation to, and within, Turkish literature, to be assimilated, excluded or marginalised by that cultural framework and publishing industry. Attempts to construct a specifically Turkish-Cypriot identity also leaves them open to charges of parochialism and prejudice towards post 1974 mainland Turkish settlers.

The anthropologist Moira Killoran compares the discursive practices of the

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<sup>83</sup> My focus is on Turkish Cypriot poets and on the work of Cypriot poets who write in English because I was brought up in both languages and in the literary traditions of English and Turkish language poetry.

unrecognized Turkish Cypriot State with that of Turcophone Cypriot poets attempting to forge a new identity, and observes that

Whether excluding the Greek Cypriot from a history, or the Turkish immigrant, neither nationalistic discourse achieves a mythology of homogeneity. That is the 'resistance' ... reaffirms the dominant ideology by creating an equally exclusionary nationalist discourse, and is not really contesting 'nationalism' at all but merely attempting to replace it with another... The liminal status of the people of North Cyprus has pitted 'Cypriot Turks' against 'Turkish Cypriots' in a battle to forge an identity that displaces their plight as people without a state, a 'dismembered nation to be reinvented' (Killoran, 1994, p.167).

The contemporary Greek and Turkish Cypriot writer must negotiate the literary markets of one of the two mainlands in order to achieve literary recognition. They must negotiate positions somewhere between the extremes of assimilation or marginalisation in the 'mother country'. In the context of their Cypriot identity their work exhibits the characteristics of minor literatures that Deleuze and Guattari identify.

Whereas in major literatures the writer can be engaged by individual concerns, minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics.... Everything takes on a collective value.... The political domain has contaminated every statement (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p.17).

### **Becoming Cypriot in English**

Bilingualism and the move across languages are central to the translocative move in my work. The multiple languages and competing literary traditions and memories of Cyprus are the ground of my poetic identity and my canon of 'Cypriot' predecessors includes George Seferis, Namik Kemal and Lawrence Durrell. Like Stephanides, who draws on Cobham (2009), my methodology is to interpret the canon

as a compendium, defined by location, subjectivity and engagement rather than cultural provenance. Thus exiles from elsewhere like Seferis and Namik Kemal, expatriates and colonials like Durrell find their place.<sup>84</sup> My use of English as my preferred language makes me part of a small group of Cypriot writers including Taner Baybars, Stephanos Stephanides, and Lysandros Pitharas<sup>85</sup> who write for, and whose work speaks to an audience beyond the dyadic allegiances implied by writing in Greek or Turkish in Cyprus.

Like all three writers I left Cyprus at a young age and went on to become more at home in English than my first language. This is not just a matter of personal biography but reflects a wider colonialised relationship between Cypriots and the English language. English plays an important role in Cypriot poetics as very few Cypriots born since the island's independence speak both Greek and Turkish. English is one of the official languages of the island and serves as the lingua franca for most intercommunal poetics. Becoming-Cypriot in English, is to be become part of a minor literature within a heavily territorialized Greek or Turkish poetics, which is likely to be seen as part of a Cypriot 'minor literature'. Whilst English is a language contaminated by colonialism for many Cypriot writers for Stephanides writing in English in particular, and acts of translation in general also offers liberatory possibilities.

Translation, like writing, may serve to replenish the layered intertextual and interlingual resources of a culture – deterritorialising one terrain to map another... For example, in the context of Cyprus, the languages of territorialization would be Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish, the rural and

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<sup>84</sup> See Stephanos Stephanides (2011 p.44-47 ) for a discussion of Seferis and Durrell and their place in the Greek Cypriot literary canon.

<sup>85</sup> Lysandros Pitharas was a London poet of Greek Cypriot extraction who died at the age of 31 in 1991. Cypriot identity and homosexual desire are central themes in his poetry. Taner Baybars (1936-2010), a Turkish Cypriot poet, left Cyprus at the age of twenty never to return, settling first in London and then in the South of France. He wrote principally in English and French.

maternal languages, the languages of the island's various colonisers would have been vehicular and deterritorialising, languages of the 'world' that are found 'everywhere' such as French and English. The referential, and reterritorialising languages of sense and culture in the post-colonial nation state would be Modern Greek and Modern Turkish...As a writer in English in Cyprus, and translator into English, I have been involved in the process of 'becoming-Minor' (Stephanides, 2011, p.42-43).

### **Becoming-Minor**

'Becoming-Minor' becoming a stranger in language, and in this context in the Cypriot canon, and all canons beside is an act of radical deterritorialisation. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of deterritorialisation describes any process that decontextualises a set of relations, robbing them of the context that stabilises their fixed relations and meanings - 'states, nations, families' and liberating their psychotic potential by rendering them virtual and open to different and distant actualisations (Deleuze and Guattari, 1972, p.34). Like the Surrealists Deleuze and Guattari utilise Freudian concepts for liberating psychic energy, particularly the concepts of the unconscious and of libido, but they criticize Freud for reterritorialising libido by mapping it onto the terrain of Oedipality. The deterritorialised Deleuzean subject is an intellectual nomad. Movement and change, negotiating and resisting territorialisation, characterize Deleuze and Guattari's concept of nomadism. The nomadic, is thus, a way of being in the space between. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari explain:

The nomad has a territory; he follows customary paths; he goes from one point to another; he is not ignorant of points (water points, dwelling points, assembly points, etc.). But the question is what in nomad life is a principle and what is only a consequence. To begin with, although the points determine paths, they are strictly subordinated to the paths they determine, the reverse

happens with the sedentary. The water point is reached only in order to be left behind; every point is a relay and exists only as a relay. A path is always between two points, but the in-between has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own. The life of the nomad is the *intermezzo* (p.380).

Rosi Braidotti defines deterritorialisation as ‘a critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour’ (Braidotti, 2006, p.34). The deterritorialisation my creative work enacts is to move between literary canons (of English and Cypriot poetry) and poetry and art practice.

Deterritorialisation, the transformation of the space of enunciation, allows new identities, embodiments and possibilities to emerge. Pitharas’ poetry explores his Cypriot identity through sensuality. ‘I can’t see this green line/ textures are more useful’ he tells us, and while ‘flags flutter as tributes to the silence, /I poke my tongue/into the hole of history, and wriggle my toes in the damp sand’. Baybars’ autobiography, or ‘images in self biography’ of his early childhood, first published in 1970, is also grounded in the sensual. All the senses are evoked but the sense of smell is particularly to the fore (Kappler, 2009, p.210). Baybars observes ‘the days are memorable through various smells, each one indicating a certain time of the day or even certain period of the month’ (Baybars, 2005, p.206). The book is divided into three parts and seven ‘sets of images’ or series of prose pieces, recalling life until the age of eleven. Some are imagistic snapshots recalling ‘holy Thursdays’, ‘tears in mother’s eyes’ and Turkish baths, others more like vignettes and short stories, for instance ‘The Minaret That Was’, ‘Wedding Feasts’, ‘Shish Kebab and Mussolini’, and ‘Two Sisters and a Brother’. Baybars employs fragmentary screen memories to relive and retell his childhood. But memory exceeds language; it is through the sensory that these images survive. The scent of cucumber and minty hellim acts as his Proustian madeleine. Memory escapes the page and Baybars finds himself putting his



face in the fridge and inhaling that scent in order to ‘bring back those small moments which I cannot recapture in verse or prose’ (Baybars, 2005, p.207). Baybars begins his self-biography with the scent of tangerine peel. Stephanides’ poem *Larnaca Oranges* is driven by a similar taste memory, ‘Before preparing for departure/you bid me find you Larnaca oranges. / Why are they late this season? You asked/eager to sweeten your blood/and become the school-child you once were’ (Stephanides, 2005 p.40).

Stephanides’ poetry and autobiographical prose moves beyond the familiar territory of Cyprus. His *Odyssey* takes him from his childhood diasporic journey from Cyprus to Manchester to Guyana and back to the island of his beginnings. Especially influenced by his years of fieldwork in Guyana in the 1980s (Stephanides, 2000), Stephanides’ poetry in *Blue Moon in Rajasthan* (2005) embraces Hindu imagery, making imaginative connections with Caribbean and Indian culture, exploring and syncretising Hellenic, Hindu and Christian mythic pantheons. Sensory memory moves from a place beyond language and goes through multiple sacred and profane translations. He is frequently spiritual, in the collection’s title poem he moves through the tenses and territories of memory, beginning in the past tense ‘Once only did I see a blue moon/ Shedding a light as pure as the look of a goddess/ In Rajasthani skies’; then the memory invades and the past becomes a present tense, ‘Her blueness shimmers and insists/ Wreaking havoc from another realm/ Beyond life’s certainties’, ending with a plea to the goddess for the future, ‘So for a moment I may feel/ The untouchable in your visible and sensual touch’ (Stephanides, 2005, p.20).

Stephanides’ spirituality is not divorced from his sensuality. They are always intertwined, as in his memories of his mother in *Life’s Weight* (2005, p.10). Perhaps the most sensual poem in the collection *Twice Born* (2005, p.29) is set on Clean

Monday, an important day in the Greek Orthodox calendar marking the first day of Lent, a ritual moment rich with implicit joyfulness of the pagan spring celebrations Christianity co-opted and replaces. The poet, on the ‘road of twenty thousand ghosts’ at Salamis, asks a statue to open his stone eyes. The statue replies with a quote, in Turkish, from the Turkish Cypriot poet Gur Genc and the many times of the poem, from the pagan, the Christian and the Sufi (Rumi is quoted at the beginning of the poem) are brought into a contemporary moment outside Saint Nicholas Cathedral. That the present moment contains within it all of the past and the possibility of new flourishing seems to be indicated by the fact that the encounter takes place at the spot where the oldest living thing in Cyprus, a tropical fig tree planted when the cathedral was completed in approximately 1220 AD, grows and ‘blossoms twice each year’.

In addition to questioning the border between the spiritual and sensual he explores the interstices between magic and ethnography too in *Dreaming Field Notes* (2005, p.48) ‘Here we make your space. / The moon stirs clouds and I/ make jottings in the pale light.’ Stephanos’ work is full of cultural references from Baudelaire and Benjamin to Rumi, Keats and Tony Harrison. His three *Ars Poetica* poems disrupt rather than make claim territorial claims (literary or political). *ars poetica: pRoem* (2005, p.13) is formally experimental, eluding and teasing the reader with its multilingual braids of sentences in Latin, Greek, French, Catalan, Turkish and thrilling the eye with different, unknown alphabets. The reader is invited to chase the poem through translation, and in any of the languages gain the sense of fecundity and joyous presence of Venus Aphrodite. In *Ars Poetica: Sacred or Daemonic* (2005, p.14) the poet warns us, ‘Do not be deluded/ I have a split tongue. ...So don’t believe me/ For different daemons speak within me/ All looking for their missing parts.’ *Ars Poetica: Water for Poetry* (2005, p.16) is dedicated to Saraswati, the Hindu goddess

of knowledge, and marries Hindu symbolism with a visceral language ‘g r g r g r’ and physicality. ‘I wait for poetry. / Or do I really wait for water?’ he asks, having shown us how knowledge is both corporeal and spiritual, that they are one and the same.

Stephanides’ poetry is haunted by loss, by bereavement for both his parents and for the family’s village, Trikomo, now in the area under Turkish Cypriot control. There is a ‘lost house in my voice’ he tells us (2005, p.24) and a longing for ‘an island that no longer exists’ (2005, p.11). Yet the poems reject nostalgia and constantly challenge, rather than reify the borders between Cypriots. He repeatedly dedicates poems to and converses with contemporary Turkish Cypriot poets, academics and artists in this collection. Stephanides’ poetics crosses many borders; becoming-Cypriot in an English poetics becomes a way of both deterritorialising the ground of Cypriot identity and of creating new spaces and possibilities for subjectivity and ‘self’ expression. This subjectivity celebrates the sensual; the transformed self still arises out of the ground of Cypriot culture, and that culture from the earth itself. Yet it is haunted too, other very different languages, cultures and deities echo and weave their spell through his poems. As Stephanides reminds us, when writing as theoretician,

Minoritarian poems in majoritarian languages do not express an identity of a minority but open the potential for another perspective, sensibility and affective attitude by creating new possibilities of speaking, thinking and writing in the performance of translation (Stephanides, 2011, p.52).

### **Canons, Borders and Literary Territories**

Both Stephanos Stephanides (2007, 2009) and Mehmet Yashin (1990, 2000) are at the forefront of minoritarian disruptions within the boundaries and territories of Cypriot poetry and have provided a central theoretical framework for my poetry by disrupting the division of Cypriot poetry into language based canons which speak to

the language-centres, or ‘motherlands’ of Greek and Turkish. Both are poets and academics whose poetry and academic practice are thematically and ethically contiguous, their poetic practice and literary theory illuminate each other and enact phronesis in relation to the collective memory of Cypriot poetry.

Mehmet Yashin explores issues of Cypriot identity and memory both thematically in his poetry and also through the delineation of the rich multi-lingual and multicultural diversity of Cypriot literary history. Yashin disrupts the canonical pull of the Greek and Turkish mother tongues and their respective mainland poetic cultural fields by finding connections between canonical figures in diverse Levantine traditions, as he does in his essay comparing Rumi and Sappho (Yashin, 2009) and by compiling anthologies of Cypriot poetry (Yashin, 1994, 1999 and 2005) which remap the canon by frequently making translation, both between languages, but also between cultures, central. In his introduction to *Step-Mothertongue: from Nationalism to Multiculturalism: Literatures of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*, a volume arising out of a conference and trilingual poetry performance he organised at Middlesex University he introduces the term ‘stepmother-tongue’ to the study of transnational and minor literatures and to Cypriot literature in particular.

Step-mothertongue is a term I use in this book to question the idea of a *mothertongue* in the context of our relationship with a language. The notion of a ‘stepmother-tongue’ emerges from the context and point of view of a multilingual and ‘uncanonized’ literature (Cypriot literature), and an in-between literary region (Cyprus, Greece and Turkey) It should not however be thought that the ‘us’ under consideration here is limited to communities in the geography of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey. In the context of globalisation and multiculturalism can only be understood in relation to other languages, literatures and cultures (Yashin, 2000, p.1).

Yashin explores neglected aspects of the island’s literary heritage and includes

Phoenician grave stone lyrics, Greek poetry from the Lusignan era as well as Cypriots who write in English (Taner Baybars and this author) in a transformed canon (Yashin, 2000).

Stephanos Stephanides, as a Cypriot poet who writes in English, an anthropologist and a translator, adopts a global, multidisciplinary, multilingual and deterritorialised stance towards literary canons and belongings in his work, and is driven by the

recognizable imperative of ‘border thinking’, a departure from the national as defined by two separate ethnic teleologies and the arrival to somewhere else - cultural arrival without partition and impermeable boundaries - which involves a new poetics of the image, the imaginary, the imagined as social facts and as political and ethical moves to negotiate the tensions between incorporation and dispersion (Stephanides, 2006, p.307).

Stephanides’ poetry, literary theory and anthropological work engage with hybridity and acts of cultural translation and decry ‘nationalism (which) suppresses the process of creolization or syncretization in the construction of the nation, and naturalizes what it has invented to give purity and homogeneity to its narrative’ (Stephanides, 2006, p.307). Now a Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Cyprus Stephanides’ earlier academic work in anthropology involved fieldwork on Kali worship amongst the descendants of Indian indentured labourers in Guyana and later in New York. Stephanides’ approach to mapping and creating new territories of a postcolonial (anti) canon of Cypriot literature is, like Yashin’s, avowedly cosmopolitan and inclusive. For Stephanides

if a new discourse is to found, one would want to insist on the non-linear relationship between departure and arrival so that arrival is not to a particular end but to the process of cultural translatability and memory, perhaps by masticating our own fantastic liminality, and perhaps to be found in our

‘Asian-Other’ within ourselves, relegated to the so-called Turkish-Cypriot ‘pseudo-state’ in official discourse. As Cyprus has just acceded to the EU, it becomes its easternmost frontier. This might be the moment to recover the Asian past of Europa raped by Zeus and taken to Crete in Cypriot literature (oral and written) constructed on hetero-memory, and may present new challenges to Eurocentrism and Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. Otherwise we remain caught between an inauthentic nationalism and the supranational modernity of the EU (Stephanides, 2006, p.308).

In his introduction to Cypriot Literature in *91<sup>st</sup> Meridian* the journal of the University of Iowa’s International Writing Program Stephanides identifies a colonial cosmopolitanism at the heart of Cypriot literary identities arising from ‘the combination of British colonialism and the Cypriot Diaspora in Egypt, in Asia Minor and the Levant, with its own knowledge of and engagement with non-Western languages and cultures’. He emphasises the changing demographic of the island, from the arrival of the Turkish settlers in the north after 1974 to the immigrants, mainly from Eastern Europe and South and East Asia, attracted to the island after EU accession in 2004, and the ‘large numbers of Cypriots resettled on the island after studying and starting their careers abroad, bringing back with them their foreign-born partners ... about a quarter of the inhabitants of the island are foreign-born’, Stephanides fashions an inclusive canon inspired by Cobham’s 1908 *Excerpta Cypria*, a compendium of writing about Cyprus, and includes ‘writers who have married Cypriots and settled on the island bringing up their children here, and who as literati, actively contribute to the cultural life of the island’ (Stephanides, 2009).

The rigid borders of the island are erased by this remapping, boundaries proliferate, difference and different ways of telling. The twin motherlands of Greece and Turkey lose their absolute primacy and new visions of Cyprus emerge in the English language poetry and prose of Miranda Hoplaros, Lisa Majaj, Aydin Mehmet

Ali, Nora Nadjarian, Lysandros Pitharas and Stephanos Stephanides. Stephanides, Hoplaros, Pitharas and Mehmet Ali all write as diasporic Cypriots. Their use of English both returns them to a more united island (English offer the possibility of speaking across the barricades without an interpreter) and also marks them as strangers, writing in the Colonialist's tongue. Their inclusion in a notional canon (not one that is yet supported by either Greek or Turkish education systems and school syllabi) makes visible erased, forgotten and under-represented aspects of Cypriot identity. Nadjarian is a Cypriot Armenian writer, whose writing frequently explores the boundaries and border zones constructed around female desire. Lysandros Pitharas, a London based Greek Cypriot poet, who died at the age of 32 in 1992, explored homosexual desire and produced work with a Cavafyesque lush queer aesthetic.<sup>86</sup> Miranda Hoplaros' novel/memoir *Mrs Bones* recounts her life as a Cypriot child in the 1970s in the final days of British Rhodesia. Multiple identities and becomings create colonial connections that extend beyond Cyprus and are then returned to Cyprus transformed through literature and language.

Lisa Majaj is the exception here, of Palestinian and American descent, Cyprus is not the originary space of exile or point of departure for her work, that place is Palestine. Majaj's relation to Cyprus is in a relay to her relation to Palestine, it is the echo of absence, the deferral of return. For the literary theorist Stavros Karayanni Majaj is 'one of the island's most poignant poetic voices thematising displacement, loss and conflict'. The fact that she does not belong to any of the sectarian narratives of loss, which offer 'very little in terms of a creative reworking of pain or coming to terms with history' is part of what makes her work so compelling because refugee

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<sup>86</sup> My autoethnographic essay on Pitharas' poetry, and about our friendship as Cypriot poets writing in English is included in *The Archive of Lost Objects* p. 164 and was also published in Adil, Alev (2009) 'Translating and mutating identities: Cypriots who write in English.' In ed. Suzan Yilmaz (2009) *Literary Criticism and Study. Series of Modern Turkish Cypriot Literature*, Vol 7 . Essays Freebirds Press, Cyprus.

literature existing in an in-between site achieves its greatest potential when it reveals ways to transcend the various ideological strictures and reach beyond the pain of stagnating nostalgia' (Karayanni, 2011, p.240.) The Cyprus that is mapped by these writers connected to Cyprus and writing in English imagines a Cyprus that shifts its geographical and cultural reach, moving across continents, at the intersection of cultural and literary traditions and cross currents; in turn seen through diasporal eyes as in Aydin Mehmet Ali's *Bedtime Story* (1994) and as one of the sites of exile (from Palestine) in Lisa Majaj's poem *Grief-Ghosts* (2008). Majaj resolves to feed her grief-ghosts, her mother among them, because 'they need me to stay alive/ and I need them to keep from dying.' Majaj's grief-ghosts do not speak from any one partisan Cypriot position because their politics are off-island. Thus they are especially valuable for a new Cypriot canon, speaking of the possibility of expressing loss, of keeping old identities extant in some way, without recourse to any sense of rancour, tolerance or forgiveness, as ways of negotiating the Cypriot Other within, the grain of an Other, contradictory retelling of one's own history.

### **Performance as a Third Space**

My performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*, seeks to imagine a new space for Cypriot poetics through embodied performance in order

to challenge established attitudes and forging a new poetics of the imaginary and the imagined as social facts, and ways of connecting with the creatively effective past(s) and the creatively effective Other and others' (Stephanides, 2009).

For Bhabha it is the incommensurability of difference in hybridity as a third space which gives rise to something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. Located in the margins, the in-between space,



our existence today is marked by a tenebrous sense of survival, living on the borderlines of the 'present' ...we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the 'beyond': an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words au-dela, here and there, and fort/da back and forth.... Being in the 'beyond' then is to inhabit an intervening space...to touch the future on the hither side ...a space of intervention in the here and now.' (Bhabha, 2004, p.7)

My practice-based research seeks, through poetic performance, to inhabit this 'beyond' through a methodology of 'moving between' languages, poetic and academic discourses, writing, performance and film/photography. Explicit in this move between is the au-dela between word and image, self as performer and as object of memory. *Memory in the Dead Zone*, a live poetry performance also investigates how performance, poetry and digital remediation can be used to explore political and psychological subjectivities in relation to collective memory, specifically around Cypriot identities. In performance a third space is created between the audience, the experience and myself. This third space resists synthesis, allowing the constituents (fragments of film, music spoken word) to remain separate but also to become transformed in the space of interrelation. Thus this is a space, one that calls on reverie, chance and context, rather than hierarchy, which is both a utopian and psychotic space. The juxtaposition of poetry, the digital, the body and the voice provides a methodological space for unfixing, fragmenting and transforming politically reified identities, narratives and collective memories. The poetics of exile (from purity and authenticity) and celebration (of uncertainty and multiplicity) enacted in this process is not specific to diasporic Cypriot identity, although collective memories of Cyprus are central to the project.

*Memory in the Dead Zone* is an autobiographical multimedia performance that evokes a multitude of ghosts, the ghosts of myth, memory, technology and contested histories. My work considers how our conceptualisation of what autobiographical memory is, its forms, intensities, mutability and veracity determine, and are determined by the ghosts summoned up by mediation and proliferated and multiplied by digital convergence. A sense of haunting and loss performed is produced in the performance by the remediation of objects and of remembered films and other random detritus of popular and high culture. Performance preserves a lost archive, a digital trace of the object whilst marking its organic absence. The performance is both ghostly and machine-like as it moves through time, from the past- past of childhood to the future-now of becoming Cypriot. The appropriated images are pushed to abstraction through layering and projections, voices layered through the use of both recorded and live voice in order to evoke rather a multitude of ghosts, of doubled, mutated, multiplied and alternative selves.

### **The Time of Memory**

The performance is divided into four parts and moves between different time zones: the 'enclave' years from 1963-73 as represented in a film-collage including home movie footage from the era, music which samples popular music of the era and fragments from my poetry relating to that era and the war in 1974; the mythic time of Orpheus and Eurydice; the time of bereavement and the present becoming-future. Moving between these different pasts *Memory in the Dead Zone* is both a multimedia retelling of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and autobiographical performance which explores memory and the performance of becoming Cypriot through poetry, myth, home movies, photographs, remembered songs and films. Memory becomes

opaque as the performance makes a story about the mediated evidence that summons memory, the faded images from home movies marked by multiple translations from super 8 film to video to DVD, remixed pop songs and fragments of film from Cyprus in the 1960s. Imam Mustafa Nuri Effendi's prison notebooks form a translucent palimpsest of unreadable originary memory over the appropriations of moments from the films of Makhmalbaf, Tarkovsky, Wong Kar Wai, Hitchcock and Resnais.

The time of memory is explored particularly through the organisation of time in the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*, which divides time into childhood, mythic time and the future now. These senses of time relate to, though they do not map or seek to illustrate the three orders of Bergsonian time Deleuze engages with. For Deleuze, repetition is not a trap, it is replete with difference: difference is the ground of repetition. Deleuze's central thesis in *Difference and Repetition* is that 'identity may not be first, that it exist as a principle but as a second principle, as a principle become; that it revolve around the Different: such would be the nature of Copernican Revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept, rather than being maintained under the domination of a concept in general already understood as identical' (Deleuze, 1997 p.41). For Deleuze, as for Nietzsche, being is becoming: there is differentiation at work within difference it self, is a becoming and never is. Difference is created by repetition, through a single substance expressed through multiplicity, ' a single voice raises the clamour of being' (Deleuze, 1997 p.35) rather than proceeding teleologically. The paradox of repetition lies in the fact that we speak of repetition by virtue of the difference that the mind draws from repetition.

Time is constituted only in the originary synthesis, which operates on the repetition of instants. Time is not a succession of instants. The originary synthesis

contracts successive independent instants into one another, thereby constituting the living present that occurs in the mind prior to memory and reflection. Time is subjective, but in relation to a passive subject. The past is the future contained within the present, no longer the immediate past of retention, but the reflexive past of reproduced particularity. Deleuze maps out three models of time and relates the concept of repetition to each.

The first order of time is circular, mythic, seasonal, diurnal, and theological. It is the time of habit (of the present). The second order of time (of the past) relates to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. For Deleuze Kantian philosophy liberates time from the circle by proposing that it is a form that is imposed on sensory experience. The (Kantian) time of the line is active; events are put into a line rather than the chain of events of passing present moments. This is a more individualised, narrativised time where there is a splitting of the 'I' of memory and the 'self' that remembers, the ego which undergoes the experience. The second synthesis of time is also Proustian and Freudian. 'Desire, Eros is at the heart of memory. Every reminiscence is erotic' (Deleuze, 1997 p.85). The third order of time is the time of the fold, of the Nietzschean Eternal Return is the time of the future, the time of metamorphosis, the repetition of 'that-which-differs-from-itself'. This is time outside the curve of which gave a God, a 'demented' time. Time itself unfolds, ceasing to be a circle, rather than things unfolding within it.

Thus the three syntheses of time relate to habit, memory and to Eternal Return, a destiny-in difference. In the first synthesis (habit time) is experienced as living present in which both past and future depend on a passive foundation. In memory time – the second synthesis time is a pure past from the point of view of a ground, which causes the passing of one present and the arrival of another. Eternal

Return is the time of the future where the past is a condition operating by default working to efface the present. The Eternal Return operates selectively and this selection is an affirmation of difference and not a unification based on the negative as in the Hegelian dialect (Deleuze, 1997 p.126).

The performance situates the event in the first order of time, which is habitual and circular, is represented through the use of everyday objects as stage props, a chair, a washing line, and a suitcase. The second synthesis of time, as the time of memory and desire is enacted through the first three acts of the performance and Eternal Return in the final segment of the performance, which is set in the future-now and interrogates what becoming-Cypriot might be.

Cinematic time is transformed too. Film, a central conduit of collective memory is particularly foregrounded in the first and second acts of the performance, first through domestic, amateur filmmaking and then through cinema. Here, through reappropriation, film becomes a mode of transmission transformed from its position as a hierarchical and traditional mode of viewing in the family archive or via the cinematic apparatus. With the growth of accessible editing packages the viewer is no longer a passive viewer but can become an active editor and performer of their memory of a film, they can speak back to the original text. The gaze now operates on different metaphorical and literal spheres and Oudart's suture as absence becomes an act of reparation, of Barthesian active reader-authorship, of remediation rather than censorship, just as Balzac's *Sarrasine* becomes Barthes' *S/Z*. One can, in the context of the democratisation of downloading and editing software propose that re-editing as viewing creates a not only a Barthesian viewing experience but also a haptic visuality. The 'cutting' and displacement involved in reappropriating film through editing collapses optical distance and some of the boundaries between touch and vision,

subject and object, viewer and film.

### **Performing Memory in the Dead Zone**

*Memory in the Dead Zone*, my 40-minute one-woman multimedia poetry performance at Side Streets Cultural Centre in the Turkish part of Nicosia in April 2011, continues and embodies this process of cutting, hyphenation and border crossings. The performance reprises and interacts with elements from the book, the website and the DVD, which works to translate the process of remembering, and memories into artefacts, and then through enactment transform the archive into an event at a specific moment, in a particular place. The product of this process is the performer and audience's memories of the event. The documentation of the event is a film, part document of the moment, part rehearsal and re-enactment, which will become subsumed into the archive through *MemoryMap*. Like a Freudian screen memory, the memory changes at each moment of being re-experienced, the repetitions of the memory-moments are palimpsested, resulting in abstraction and opacity, leading to difference through repetition.

I performed a temporal translocation of my Cypriot identity, and by extension sense of self, through a ritual enactment of elements of my memory archive. I juxtaposed the liveness of the performance by interacting with a recorded voice, by being present both as an embodied and as a digital projection. Memory is a bricolage of original and borrowed images, music and text, remixed, mashed up and literally re-projected on a screen that separates the performer from the audience. I inhabited difference and repetition by combining and transforming elements of the project across media forms, by using texts in *The Archive of Lost Objects*, images archived on *MemoryMap*, and images from *An Architecture of Forgetting* and the film-collage

*screen/memory*.

Performed less than ten minutes walk away from house I was born in, to an audience of approximately 50, most of whom were Cypriot poets, writers and artists. Many were Greek Cypriot and had had to cross the border to attend the performance;<sup>87</sup> *Memory in the Dead* is an evocation of reminiscence. What emerges is an elusive autobiography of the 'objective subject' (Deren, 2008),<sup>88</sup> from my childhood in Cyprus to the present day. The performance is divided into four scenes, or 'machines':<sup>89</sup> the time machine, the screen machine, the death machine and the desiring machine. The *time machine* projects Super 8 film footage shot by Ahmet Cem during the 'enclave years' of Cyprus in the 1960s, HD digital footage I shot in Sifnos, Greece in 2006 and music by Steve Kennedy who composed original music containing elements of music from my childhood<sup>90</sup> and live poetry performance. The film was edited after the music was composed and determined the pace of the editing.

In contrast Steve Kennedy was given the edited visuals of the *screen machine* and composed the music at a pace dictated by the visuals. The second act edits together moments from the film collage *screen/memory* (2006). The moments from the films are layered with translucent images of pages from Mustafa Nuri Effendi's notebook and have a recorded conversation between Orpheus and Eurydice that arises out of the (now masked) fragments of subtitles from the re-edited films clips. The film

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<sup>87</sup> The Greek Cypriot State disapproves of crossing into the unrecognised Turkish occupied regions of Cyprus. Attendance and participation in events in the TRNC involves crossing a border and showing one's identity papers to what the Republic sees as an occupying force. Most Greek Cypriot friends who cross do so in the spirit of rapprochement but the act does not imply approval or recognition of TRNC.

<sup>88</sup> 'As in science, the process of creative art is twofold: the experience of reality by the artist on one side, and his manipulation of that experience into an art reality on the other' (Deren, 2008, p.68.)

<sup>89</sup> 'Just as social machines can be grouped under the general title of Collective equipment, technological machines of information and communication machines operate at the heart of human subjectivity, not only within its memory and intelligence, but within its sensibility, affects and unconscious fantasies' (Guattari, 1995, p.4).

<sup>90</sup> Aphrodite's Child 'End of the World', The Carpenters 'Yesterday Once More' and Ajda Pekkan's 'Tanrı Misafiri'

collage projections were projected onto screens made from a canvas sheet on a suitcase, making a kind of ghostly television, during *time machine*, and onto the Lefkara tablecloth on a washing line during the rest of the performance.

The performance moves through time, from the past- habitual tense (I used to) of childhood in the *time machine*, the present-past tense (you would have) of collective (film and mythic) memory in the *screen machine*, to the present tense (we do) white noise of the *death machine* and the future-perfect tense (they will become) of becoming Cypriot, human, machine in the *desiring machine*. The appropriated images are pushed to abstraction through layering and projections; voices are layered through the use of both recorded and live voice. Under the technical direction of Nuno Salihbegovic I devised a live illusion of the projection of my face through the screen using the *Isadora* programme.<sup>91</sup> The image is both ghostly and machine-like, seems disembodied, although my feet are visible behind the Lefkara tablecloth. This provides an appropriate embodiment and symbol for my desire to perform my memory archive and translate it into an intangible memory of the event in the context of the audience's collective experience.<sup>92</sup>

The performance ends in the future-now of the Deleuzean order of time where myth and memory meet, and there is the possibility of a time of Eternal Return. My performance evokes and creates a space where the traumatic memories that divide the communities are not dismissed, silenced or erased; instead the repetitive and contradictory 'times' of Cypriot memory, find modes of repetition which move beyond binary and Manichean interpretations of Cypriot history and memory and create a space where indeterminacy and difference is affirmed and enunciated.

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<sup>91</sup> Designed by the choreographer Mark Coniglio, the *Isadora* programme enables the user to connect audio, film and still image files, so one can collage and create interactive installations in real time.

<sup>92</sup> There is DVD documentation, an edited palimpsest of the performance and a rehearsal of the performance that accompanies this thesis, but this artefact is a representation, or souvenir of the performance, not the performance itself.



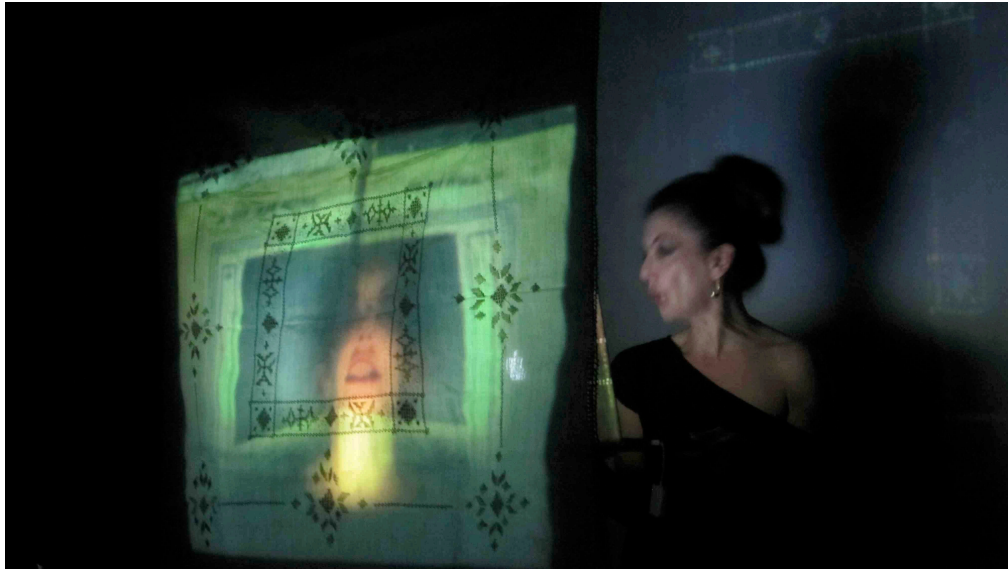


Figure 11. Performance of *Memory in the Dead Zone* at Side Streets Cultural Centre, 2011 by Anber Onar

The performance at Side Streets in 2011 was the most complete performance of *Memory in the Dead Zone* but there were other performances of extracts and additional fragments. The first performance of any part of the show was my performance of *time machine* at the University of Greenwich/Birkbeck College Experimental Poetry conference and festival. This served as a public rehearsal and was followed by a series of studio rehearsals. The complete show without any live element, *Jocasta's Dream*, was projected in the Duveen Gallery at Tate Britain as part of *Late at the Tate* in November 2011.

A re-edited and restaged 20-minute fragment, *Mapping a Line*, presented as a dialogue between a Greek Cypriot actor, speaking my poetry in Greek, and myself was staged at the ARTos Foundation in Lefkosia in March 2012. The performances at Side Streets, Tate Britain and the ARTos Foundation were charged with significance for me because they were performed on both sides of the border in Nicosia and at the Tate Britain where I spent many weekends as a child when I settled in London at the age of twelve.

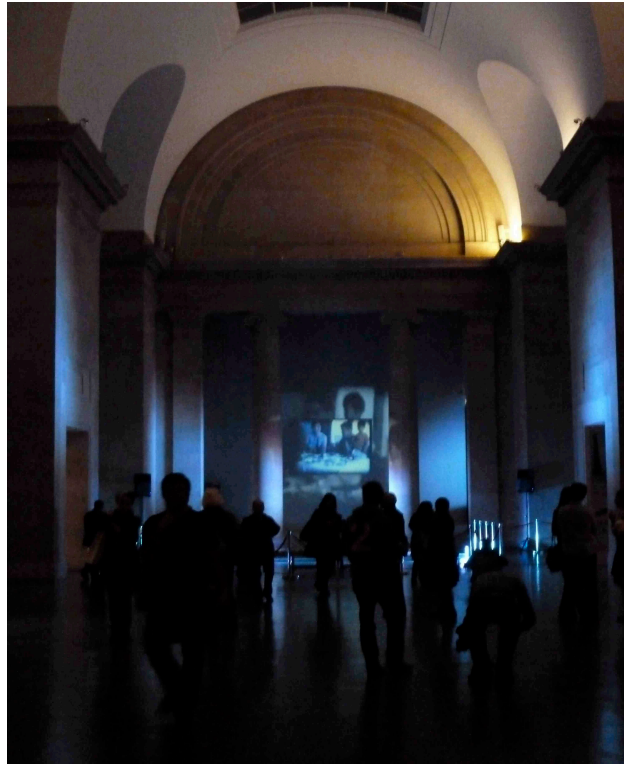


Figure 12. *Jocasta's Dream* installation in the Duveen Gallery at Tate Britain, 2011 by Alev Adil

The work considers how our conceptualisation of what autobiographical memory is, its forms, intensities, mutability and veracity determine, and are determined by, the objects we use for both private reminiscence and the media forms that dominate our collective memory. The remediation of objects and of remembered films and other random detritus of popular and high culture through performance preserves a digital trace of the object whilst marking its organic absence and suggests new active ways of reading our memories and sense of self. Literary and aesthetic strategies which favour fragmentation and multiplication over chronology, naturalism, narrative and realism and an eclectic elision between diverse genres and discursive practices from philosophy to poetry and the multimedia image/text provide a framework for a self-reflexive performance of collective and individual (problematised) 'Turkish Cypriot' memory which seeks to represent 'no One', no single truth, but rather to abstract autobiography. Refusing the smooth, unbroken

narrative in favour of the fracture and fragment is a political as well as aesthetic choice, an attempt to disrupt oppressive dominant narratives not by replacing or erasing them (the repressed returns) but by breaking them, and living in the space between. The aim is to disrupt, fragment, repeat, layer and multiply memories so that no single coherent memory-narrative is reified.

In conclusion, Cypriot poetics have been heavily territorialised across Greek and Turkish language and cultural centres off the island. There is a small and diverse group of writers becoming-Cypriot in English, which if they function at all as a collective, do so as a minor literature within globally minor literatures. Yet, as Stephanides argues becoming-Cypriot through an English poetics offers syncretic and liberating possibilities. The transformed canons he proposes offer a counter-memory to nationalistic poetics. For Foucault ‘since memory is actually a very important factor in struggle...if one controls people’s memory, one controls their dynamism’ (Foucault 1989 p.91). Foucault proposes the notion of ‘counter-memory’, memories that are different from and challenge dominant discourses. Differing political and cultural groups hold contested counter-memories. Political discourse is marked not by its content but by its insistently readerly form, the explicitness of the signs and meanings of Cypriot identities. The counter-memory of poetic discourse is a formal, not a thematic memory; it is a refusal of straightforwardly political transparency and translatability.

## Chapter 6: Collective Memory Practice and Performance in Cyprus



In the last chapter I situated my work within the heavily territorialised field of Cypriot poetics, and proposed my performance as an attempt to create counter-memory, an act of translocation within Cypriot collective memory practice. This chapter situates my practice as an enunciation at the borders of anthropology and poetry and memory and forgetting, within the field of anthropoetics (Behar, 1996). Three anthropologists working on collective memory practices in Cyprus delineate contested territories of the sense of place (Loizos), acts of narration (Papadakis) and imagined space (Bryant) of Cypriot collective memory. Autobiographical performance is considered within a framework of modes of collective memory and commemorative performance, pilgrimage and ritual, which create, maintain and transform Greek, Turkish, refugee, exile, settler, immigrant and emigrant Cypriot identities.

Whilst the artist and poet often strive to reproduce the particularity of their memory, individual memory is part of, not separate from collective memory. The contemporary understanding and usage of the term 'collective memory' mainly derives from Emile Durkheim's theoretical elaborations on the significance of rituals and from Maurice Halbwachs' influential study *The Social Framework of Memory*.

According to Halbwachs, the study of memory extends beyond the properties of the individual subjective mind. Instead, he argues that it is in society that people acquire and recognise their memories. It is impossible, according to Halbwachs, for individuals to remember in any coherent way outside of the social groups to which they belong. Group membership not only provides the intellectual framework for remembering and forgetting but is also able to produce memories in individuals of events that they never experienced in any direct sense. Halbwachs explicitly resisted the intuitionist subjectivism of Henri Bergson with respect to the study of memory as quintessentially individual affair.<sup>93</sup> An individual memory is an utterance in a language that is only comprehensible within the context of the language of a collective memory.

According to the cultural sociologist Jeffrey Alexander ‘cultural performance is the social process by which actors, individually, or in concert, display for others the meaning of their social situation’ (Alexander (2011 p.28). *Memory in the Dead Zone* seeks to make the sense that individual memory is only understood through the wider framework of competing systems of collective representation by working with appropriated fragments from private family archives (my great grandfather Imam Mustafa Nuri’s prison notebooks,<sup>94</sup> Ahmet Cem’s amateur film footage), objects that serve an iconic function (a suitcase, Lefkara tablecloth, washing line) and elements of popular culture in order to explore the intermingling of individual and collective memorializing practices and discourses by performing my archive.

My performance at Side Streets Cultural Centre was a very specific social performance. Whilst the performance was open to the public approximately 80% of

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<sup>93</sup> For a discussion regarding the differences between collective and individual memory see Paul Ricoeur (2006).

<sup>94</sup> See chapter 7 for more information about Imam Mustafa Nuri and his prison notebooks.

the audience of fifty were individually invited Cypriot writers, artists and academics. The performance was constructed for this audience and presupposed some shared cultural referents, like the snippets of home movie show the Turkish flag draping a coffin a funeral during the fighting in 1964 and primary school children engaged in nationalist rituals, despite the fact that the film was hard to read (because the image was projected on fabric draped over a suitcase). The work engages closely with memory in general, the place of memory in a digitally mediated reality and specifically with Cypriot collective memory practices. However, the reading of such references will differ as Cypriot histories, both Greek and Turkish, draw on their respective mainland histories and historical memories. A young Greek Cypriot audience member presumed the footage was from 1974, an understandable misunderstanding, especially as the soundtrack reprises music up to 1974.

An individual's educational, cultural and political ties to mainland culture shape the narratives and interpretations that emerge as autobiographical and collective memory. The top-down narratives that create these national identities<sup>95</sup> produce binaristically divergent official narratives of collective memory within each community.<sup>96</sup> Much of the sociological and anthropological academic work on Cypriot memory explores the (political) manipulation, and thus production, of social memory (Bryant, 2004) whilst others place more emphasis on the act of cultural experience and interpretation (Loizos, 1981). Papadakis (2005) explores how not only the official narratives of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, but also how the private memories of the two communities produce divergence through strategies

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<sup>95</sup> For a discussion on the formation of national cultures see Gellner, Ernest (1983) *Nations and Nationalism* Oxford: OUP and Anderson, Benedict. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

<sup>96</sup> For instance Panteli and Denktash produce diametrically opposed histories of the history on inter communal conflict in Cyprus in Panteli, Stavros (1990) *The Making of Modern Cyprus: from obscurity to statehood* New Barnet, England: Interworld Publications. and Denktash, Rauf (1982) *The Cyprus Triangle* London George Allen and Unwin.

of silence and of forgetting. 'Our' (national/ communal/ political) responsibility is to remember 'Our' pain, and by implication or through silence to diminish or erase the suffering of the other, whose adversities do not meet the needs of 'Our' narrative.

Pain is what unites and divides Cypriots, its erasure and inflation, the tired and often tiresome private and public performances of suffering: the soiled stories passed on from generation to generation in the home and in school (Spyrou, 2006), the museums (Papadakis, 2006; Scott, 2002), the photos of slain and suffering children at the Greek Cypriot border, the women who strike classical tragic poses of grief as they attempt to 'walk home'.<sup>97</sup> These discourses emphasise the divisions that mark the contestations of memory between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and are silent on the myriads of political, generational and cultural divisions and potential commonalities within and across communities.

In his account *How Societies Remember* (1989) the social theorist Paul Connerton argues for the embodied and performative nature of collective memory. For Connerton our experience of the present largely depend upon our 'habit memory', images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are 'conveyed by (more or less ritual) performance' by commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices. More recently Connerton has turned his attention to the issue of forgetting. He distinguishes between modes of repressive forgetting imposed upon the subject, as explored by Milan Kundera in his novel *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1983) and Nietzschean 'active forgetting' (Nietzsche, 2003) and seeks 'to disentangle the different types of acts that cluster together under the single term 'to forget' (Connerton, 2008). He identifies at least 'seven types of forgetting: repressive erasure; prescriptive forgetting; forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new

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<sup>97</sup> The Greek Cypriots Women Walk Home movement's manifesto can be seen at <http://www.cyprus.com.cy/womenwalkhome.htm>

identity; structural amnesia; forgetting as annulment; forgetting as planned obsolescence and forgetting as humiliated silence' (Connerton, 2008).

Cypriots have deployed forgetting efficiently. Greek Cypriot dominant official political discourse remembers the events of 1974 and represents the history of the Republic up to that point as one of peaceful co-existence, this narrative 'forgets' that the Green Line was drawn, the dead zone was born, in 1964 (Papadakis, 2005). It remembers The Missing and The Dead just as official Turkish Cypriot discourse 'forgets' them. All the Missing are dead, it's all just history, not a live issue: forgetting as humiliated silence, and as repressive and prescriptive erasure. Whereas in Greek Cypriot dominant discourse the missing are *agnoumenoi*, 'not-recovered' (not yet),<sup>98</sup> the sentence is not finished, the issue is not over (Sant Cassia, 2005). Turkish Cypriot missing are *kayıplar*,<sup>99</sup> are the 'lost'. Lost to us, gone, full stop. These divergent approaches to remembering and forgetting war echo the positions taken by Venizelos' Greece and Ataturk's new Republic of Turkey to the population exchange agreed at Lausanne in 1923.

Official performances of (Greek) mourning and of (Turkish) forgetting in Cyprus can be seen as re-enactments of the commemorative strategies employed in the 1920s. During the population exchange about 400,000 Muslims (many of whom were primarily Greek speakers) were forced to leave Greece and 1.2 million Greek Orthodox Christians (most of whom spoke Turkish fluently) were forced to leave Turkey for Greece. Citizens of a multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire who had lived in distinct communities but in close proximity with other communities, languages and cultures, and had been identified primarily through religion were transplanted and taught to become monolingual nationalised Greeks and Turks (Clark, 2007).

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<sup>98</sup> *Agnoumenoi* means 'not recovered' in Greek

<sup>99</sup> *Kayıplar* means 'the lost' in Turkish.



Greek collective memory offers, and insists upon, many official commemorations of loss, from place names and national holidays to football team names. In contrast Ataturk's Republic demanded the erasure of difference and encouraged refugees from Greece to forget their lost homes and embrace the monocultural, secularist values of the new 'young Republic'. There is still no official commemoration of mourning for their loss, and at the time there was an official reluctance even to view the transplanted as refugees, rather the government was 'determined to see the population exchange as a heroic undertaking' (Clark, 2007, p.179). This official amnesia has often been circumvented by local self appointed archivists, 'the telling of the local epic is the self-imposed task of retired schoolteachers, who form a bridge between official versions of history and the collective memories and lore of the people who grew up with them' (Clark, 2007, p.78), and local cultural forms which reflect the lost minorities who instigated them.

### **Modes of Memory**

Memories of a Cypriot childhood in the years 1960-1974 will vary radically depending on whether one was urban or rural, rich or poor, Greek or Turkish, Armenian, or Maronite Cypriot, girl or boy. We have shared memories of the sensual presence of the island, but even these fragments will have been given very different meanings by different individuals. The taste of an orange may bring back the memory of a happy childhood as in Stephanides' poem about his emigrant father (Stephanides, 2005, p.40) or of a lost home, war and thus of refugee status (Loizos, 1981, p.184). Both juxtapose the pleasure of the fruit with a sense of loss and a lost sense of belonging. Despite divergent recollections, the physical and sensual reminiscence becomes framed by a poetic symbolic so that it is forced into the political domain and

the politics of loss.

Individual memory is not separate from, or of a radically different order to, collective memory. Individual memories are utterances, which only have meaning within a language provided by social context, as a collective memory practice.

Halbwachs' 'Social Frameworks of Memory' (1925) has proved to be the cornerstone of the interdisciplinary field of memory studies. Halbwachs distinguishes between four kinds of interrelated memory, autobiographical memory, which is the memory of our own experience; historical memory, which is the memory we accrue through historical records; history, which is the remembered past which we can access through historical record but to which we have no 'organic' relation and collective memory, an active past that forms our identity. Historical knowledge can be dead, a matter of (forgotten or forgettable) record, or organic, part of the collective memory of the active past that forms our identity, kept alive through the State, or through popular culture. Halbwachs rejects heavily individualized psychological approaches to memory like Freud's and observes that

One is rather astonished when reading psychological treatises that deal with memory to find that people are considered there as isolated beings. ... Yet it is in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories... Most of the time, when I remember it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs...*The groups of which I am a part at any time give me the means to reconstruct them* (the italics are mine) (Halbwachs, 1992, p.38).

Whilst Freud explores how the individual unconscious uses forgetting as a repressive tool, Halbwachs enables us to explore how autobiographical memory utterances are given meaning within the context of groups and social memory practices, that collective memory is deployed in order to provide modes of

legitimation and explanation. Much of the sociological work on memory explores how collective memory is constructed and maintained through processes of political and social manipulation and production, whilst others give more emphasis to the act of cultural experience, to interpretation.

Noticing the ways in which images of the past are the products of contestation has led varieties of both constructionists and deconstructionists to emphasise that the past is produced in the present and is thus malleable. Memory is not an unchanging vessel for carrying the past into the present; memory is a process not a thing, and it works differently at different points in time (Halbwachs, 1992, p.19).

All memory is collective in that its enunciation is only comprehensible within a discursive practice, and the myriad of social contexts both unofficial and official which shape and frame that discursive practice will determine the meaning made of the memory.

The meanings and modes of collective memory and the mediation of individual memory practices are also inextricably related to technologies of communication (Olick and Robbins, 1998). Le Goff (1992) divides the history of memory into five distinct periods. According to Le Goff peoples without writing, in which memory practices are not highly developed arts, possess an 'ethnic memory'. In the second phase, the move from prehistory to Antiquity, orality is supplemented, though never entirely supplanted, by writing. In the Middle Ages memory involved 'the Christianization of memory and of mnemotechnology, the division of collective memory between a circular liturgical memory and a lay memory little influenced by chronology, the development of the memory of the dead' (Le Goff, 1992, p.68). The fourth stage of the history of memory identified by Le Goff traces the revolution in memory effected by the development of the printing press and of print media and a

society where collective memory grows and develops until it is no longer possible for an individual to entirely assimilate it. In the nineteenth century Romanticism saw the development of new forms of collective memorialisation from coins, postage stamp and medals to souvenirs and new heterotopias of memory through the birth of the museum and the revival of libraries and archives. The development of electronic means of transmitting, storing and receiving information in the twentieth century is Le Goff's fifth stage of the history of memory. Electronic media in popular culture, science, private memory practices and archives has transformed ways of both making memory and of conceptualising it. Le Goff's stages of memory need not be read as a teleology, rather, especially in the digital realm, where the spoken, liturgical, written, still and moving images can be archived together as a landscape in which all operate simultaneously.

Le Goff's periodisation of memory is particularly useful for considering the history of poetic memory. Cypriot folk poetry, in both Greek and Turkish, has its roots in oral culture and often shared and adapted works across cultures under Ottoman rule. The traditions of Byzantine and Ottoman demotic oral poetry were brought to Cyprus by wandering minstrels from Asia Minor around the 11th century. These professional folk poets were mostly blind beggars who were trained, unlike the storytellers of the times to retain and repeat the texts faithfully without changing them (Eberhard, 1955, p.60). It is the growth of the printing press and of collective memory that brings about the absolute division, not only between Greek and Turkish literary traditions but also between collective and communal identities. The composition of Greek national identity and consciousness were a direct product of the eighteenth century European print capitalism and the integration of Greece into the expanding European economy (Friedman 1994; Carras 2004).

During the development of European culture and economy, Greece and in particular what it was known as ancient Greece, was increasingly perceived through intellectual movements such as ‘philhellenism’ and ‘neoclassicism’ as a legitimate ancestor of Europe (Dimou 2009). By the middle of the eighteenth century, English, French and German scholars produced mass prints of Greek classical texts, recreating a glittering ancient Greek civilisation. Towards the end of the century, this became accessible to Greek speaking Christian intellectuals and students who lived or studied outside the confines of the Ottoman Empire. Indicative of the Greek intellectual presence in Europe is the appearance of the first Greek newspapers in Vienna at the end of the eighteenth century such as *Ephemeris* (1790), *Ermis o Logios* (1811), *Ellenikos Telegraphos* (1812), *Philologikos Telegraphos* (1817), and *Kalliopi* (1819). In addition, *Melissa* and *Athena* (1819) were published in Paris. The publication of these newspapers and the return of some of these intellectuals and students to the ‘homeland’ coincided with the birth of Greek nationalism and with the process of ‘de-barbarisation’ (Anderson, 2006 p.72) of modern Greeks, which manifested itself in an unprecedented interest in Greek language, arts and folklore and in general the constitution of subjects worthy of being the heirs of ancient Greeks.

Canonical Greek Cypriot literature, as expressed in PEN Publications for instance, sees Greek Cypriot poetry as a subset of Greek poetry, and Greek Cypriot national identity as a subset of Greek identity. In the introduction to *Five Short Essays on Cypriot Culture* (1981) Klitos Ioannide speaks repeatedly of 3000 years history of Cypriot literature, a vision arising out of European philhellenism.<sup>100</sup> In the same

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<sup>100</sup> The scholar who follows faithfully the successive periods of Greek history will find in Cyprus and its literature Homeric remains, archaic art, art belonging to the classical and Hellenistic periods, relations with Rome and above all, Byzantine culture which is still alive and diffused today. At the same time he will discern the Modern Greek figure and Modern Greek historical realities as they were formed after the fall of Constantinople and during the hard, unrelenting years of Turkish rule. Naturally some distinctive local characteristics of language, the flavour and tone of Cypriot culture, contribute to

collection Olymbidou sees Hellenism as the essential characteristic of Cypriot poetry. ‘Cypriot poetry, however, is characterised not only by its age-old tradition but also by its Greekness’ (Olymbidou, 1981, p.22). As Stephanides observes, ‘the conservative reterritorialisation and overdetermination of ethnic origins in the post-colonial period in Cyprus emulates the emergence of European nation-states in the nineteenth century, which ... in contrast to the Americas seeks ethnic origins rather than syncretism or creolization in cementing their nationalisms’ (Stephanides, 2006, p.307). How the growth of electronic media, the final stage of Le Goff’s history of memory will influence the institutional and chauvinistic uses of poetry as a kitsch nationalistic tool by the governments and educational institutions of both communities remains to be seen. The desire to reclaim the territory of poetry and to take the poem off the page and out of both the official and the purely literary environment were strong drivers for the development of my performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*.

In *The Vulnerable Observer* (1996) the anthropologist Ruth Behar argues for a personal poetics to take centre stage in anthropology with an autobiographical narrative that begins in 1989, when Behar’s Cuban exile grandfather died in Miami Beach. Behar, on the other side of the globe in a Spanish village doing anthropological research on death customs felt profoundly guilty for not being at his deathbed. Dealing with and incorporating her sense of personal loss and bereavement into her research leads Behar to reject the concept of the ethnographer as ‘semi-detached participant-observer’, and instead resolves to become a ‘vulnerable observer’. The ethnographic fieldworker’s duty, according to Behar, is to examine and

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the variety and enrichment of Greek culture. This is also true of other regions of Greece such as Crete, Macedonia and the Ionian Islands. No foreign conquests, such as those of the Franks, the Venetians, the Turks and the British, ever changed the nature and the Greek content of Cypriot culture even though we find historical remains which witness the passing of the island’s conquerors (Ioannide in Sophocleus, 1981, p.22)

work through their involvement with the subject of study thus making more visible the complex and multi-layered power structures, unconscious motivations and emotional climates at play in the anthropologist's relationship with their subject, dimensions that are sutured out of conventional ethnographies. Behar is seeking to create a poetic anthropology, to become 'an *anthropoeta*, unveiling the poetic underpinnings of the anthropological quest for home in a world of homelessness and homesickness' (Behar, 2003, p.49).

### **Anthropology and Autobiography**

The three anthropologists (Loizos, Papadakis and Bryant) whose work on collective memory in Cyprus I now want to discuss are all aware of the complexities of their situated practice although none place themselves centre stage in the same way that Behar does. The anthropologist Peter Loizos is alive to the range of social contexts and memory practices that determine identity in his studies of the people of Argaki village in Cyprus (Loizos, 1981). In *The Heart Grown Bitter* he offers a portrait of the formation of a collective memory of the war in Cyprus in 1974 in its immediate aftermath. This is not an autoethnography, Loizos does not deconstruct or dwell on his mixed feelings and identity unduly, but it is an autobiographical ethnography. Loizos is returning to his father's village. He is quickly drawn in to an utterly foreign culture and network of kinship. Both anthropologist and prodigal grandson, this is a record of Loizos' journey of becoming Cypriot as well an ethnography, which traces how refugee memories are given a collective form. Loizos acknowledges the political uses that the refugees' memories, their patriotic poems and songs are put to, but he sees the dominant collective memory narratives of the Republic of Cyprus after 1974 as reflecting the refugees' memories and conceptualisation of their identity rather than dictating them. Loizos is greeted as a

long lost relative by his extended family and records his ethnographic and filial scruples, his 'attachment to the community owes as much to sentiment and family ties as to the fact (he) studied it as an anthropologist' (Loizos, 1981,p.ix). Loizos' *The Heart Grown Bitter* is 'a chronicle of Cypriot war refugees' after 1974 and an autobiography, the story of his becoming-Cypriot at a time when Cypriot identity was in the process of re-articulation.

Loizos repeatedly draws the analogy between the refugees of 1974 and of the mass resettlement ratified by the Lausanne treaty of 1923 in the aftermath of the Greco-Turkish war in 1922 (Loizos, p.93, p.144, p.186 and p. 210). He discerns the sense that 'their (Greek Cypriot) defeat as having been produced by a high-level 'betrayal' (a theme which also occurred in the 1922 Asia Minor rout of the Greek army by the Turks, when Greek generals were tried and executed for 'treason')' (Loizos, 1981, p.93). More than this is a strong historical memory of domination by the Turks. 'Had the Turks but known it, *the mythologising power of history* was working for them by eating into Greek morale' (my italics) (Loizos, 1981, p.144). This is also still an autobiographical memory, several of the Greek Cypriots of Argaki recount a meeting with an Armenian watch peddler with his story of being made a refugee five times and an old man who still keeps the key to the house in Smyrna he had had to flee in 1922. 'Survivors of earlier feats of arms testified to the potency of the images from the history books that possessed my aunt Iottou and others', Loizos tells us (Loizos, 1981, p.144).

Historical memory frames and gives meaning to autobiographical memory. Autobiographical, and anthropological, memory is liable to amnesia where experience intrudes upon the story needed to express the pain of dispossession. Loizos' relatives speak of their lost homes from the former home of a Turkish Cypriot family. That



family is never mentioned (Loizos, 1981 p.182). Loizos does discuss Turkish loss and hopes of return but he never raises the question of how Greek Cypriot refugees feel about taking some one else's home, a question which frames Navaro-Yashin's approach to the illegal Turkish Cypriot state, and is central to her investigation of Turkish Cypriot refugees' experience (Navaro-Yashin, 2009).

### **Narrations of Loss**

In the Greek Cypriot official narrative, Cyprus has always been a Greek island, since antiquity. In Greek Cypriot school books the narrative runs thus (this does not represent the author's views): Cyprus is a Greek island. It has been a Greek island for four millennia; it is a central topoi of Hellenic myth and culture. Cypriots suffered under the yoke of colonial oppression for the last 500 years, brutal Ottoman oppression from 1571 until 1878 when the island was ceded to the British; until the 1955 EOKA movement (the *Ethniki Organosis Kypriou Agoniston*, National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters) fighting for Enosis (union with Greece) finally liberated Cyprus from the British in 1960. However the constitution, and guarantor powers given to former colonial occupiers Turkey and Britain, as well as to Greece, gave the new independent Republic of Cyprus a problematic start because it was undemocratic in that it gave disproportionate power to the Turkish Cypriot minority. Turkish and Greek Cypriots had always lived harmoniously, most Turkish Cypriots are 'really' Greek Cypriots anyway, who had converted to Islam under Ottoman rule. The political machinations of Turkey and the opportunism of the Turkish Cypriot leadership who wanted to undermine the Republic because they wanted Taksim, union with Turkey, led to some conflict during the 1960s and some Turkish Cypriots were forced by their leaders to leave their homes in mixed areas and resettle in

impoverished and overcrowded enclaves. A coup against the legitimate government of President Makarios in 1974 provided Turkey with opportunity it had always sought to invade the island. The current situation is tragic; there are the missing who have not been accounted for, and refugees who want to return to their homes. The Republic is now part of Europe but its territory is still partially occupied by the Turks. The Greeks Cypriots have always been the victims of Turks and Turkey's expansionist ambitions.

The Turkish Cypriot official narratives emphasise the geography of Cyprus, its close proximity to Turkey, and write the history of Cyprus as a history of a series of occupations. A summary of the Turkish Cypriot official narrative (this does not represent the author's views) runs thus: the Ottomans brought tolerance to the island; they did not suppress the Orthodox Church as the Catholic Venetians had done. Cyprus was part of the Ottoman Empire for hundreds of years and Turkish Cypriots, as descendants of Ottoman settlement have been here for longer than Europeans have been settled in America, and have a right to live here. Cypriots lived reasonably harmoniously on a day-to-day basis under British rule although the Church and the Greek Cypriot education system were always hostile to Turks. The popularity of Enosis amongst the majority of Greek Cypriots in the 1950s and violent terrorist struggle by EOKA, who attacked Turkish Cypriots as well as the British, indicate they want Cyprus to be a purely Greek island. Turkish Cypriots set up TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilati*, The Turkish Resistance Organisation) to counter EOKA in 1958. In 1960 Greek Cypriots agreed to the conditions of the Republic, which safeguarded Turkish Cypriot minority rights, in bad faith and only three years later this led to war. Greek Cypriots attacked and murdered Turkish Cypriots in mixed areas, forced them to leave mixed villages and move into ethnic enclaves. Following the invasion of the Republic by Greece, when Britain refused to fulfil its duty as a

guarantor power, Turkey (*ana vatan* the motherland), intervened in 1974 in order to save the *yavru vatan* (baby state) of the Turkish Cypriots. Since then there has been no bloodshed. Turkish Cypriots, and their rights as a minority, have never been respected by Greek Cypriots.

There are of course other quasi-official collective memories, which weave through and disrupt the narratives summarised above. Socialist and Communist Cypriots have consistently emphasised the intercommunal harmony, commonality of class and by extension of demotic languages, cultures and shared quotidian tastes and customs in defining Cypriotness and minimised differences of religion and nationalist heritage. They largely blame outside forces: Turkey, Britain and the USA and their global realpolitik for the violence and intercommunal conflict on the island. President Christofias' comment in September 2010 at the Brookings Institute in Washington that 'The involvement at the end of the day of the three guarantor powers which all played a negative role unfortunately towards the developments in Cyprus, the two so-called mainlands, in fact, invaded both'<sup>101</sup> is part of this discourse. The fact that these comments were politically controversial in the Republic indicates that this is a contested discourse for many Greek Cypriot institutions and individuals.

Turkish Cypriot socialists, especially CTP (The Republican Turkish Party *Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi*), campaigned successfully for an affirmative vote for the reunification of Cyprus under the Annan Plan.<sup>102</sup> The cultural activity surrounding the campaign for a 'Yes' vote signalled a sea change in Turkish Cypriot identity politics,

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<sup>101</sup> <http://www.cyprus-mail.com/president-christofias/furore-over-president-s-comments-case-malicious-distortion/20101001>

<sup>102</sup> Kofi Annan led the United Nations proposal to resolve the Cyprus dispute by unifying the island as the 'United Republic of Cyprus', which would be a federation of two states, loosely based on the Swiss model. After protracted negotiations and five revised versions the plan was put to the people in a referendum in 2003. The proposal won the support of 65% of Turkish Cypriots but only 24% of Greek Cypriots. The United Nations Annan Plan for Cyprus is available at [http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/Annan\\_Plan\\_Text.html](http://www.hri.org/docs/annan/Annan_Plan_Text.html).

one which foregrounded the Cypriotness of Turkish Cypriots whose future would be as part of a federated Republic within Europe, not tied to Turkey. This became a popular, but not uncontested Turkish Cypriot narrative in Turkish Cypriot identity politics. However, the Greek Cypriot ‘No’ vote, continued isolation and the failure of the reunification talks between Mehmet Ali Talat and President Christofias of AKEL (*Anorthotikó Kómma Ergazómenou Laouí*, The Progressive Party of Working People), two left wing leaders who seemed committed to a settlement has led to some disillusionment.

In *Echoes from the Dead Zone* (2005) the anthropologist Papadakis examines how autobiographical memories are narrated within these frameworks of collective memory. His journey, from the partial narratives and memories of his Greek Cypriot childhood to uncomfortable confrontations with contested understandings of Cypriot history as a situated ethnographer frames Papadakis’ exploration of how the official collective memories of the two communities in Cyprus are generated. He has explored how collective memory is constructed through history as taught in the State education system (Papadakis, 2008), holidays and dates and performances of commemoration (Papadakis, 2003), maps, place names and museums and how these generate divergent, mutually incompatible narratives of recent Greek and Turkish Cypriot history and identity.

Papadakis’ interviews are intimate and poetic and are as remarkable for the omissions, absences and forgettings at the heart of reminiscence as for the sentiments consciously evoked. For instance, Mrs Kationou, a resident of a formerly mixed neighbourhood in Nicosia whose Turkish Cypriot inhabitants were forced to leave in 1963-4, recounts her autobiographical memories of her close friendship with her landlord’s wife, who acted as a ‘milk-mother’ and breastfed Mrs Kationou’s baby

when her milk ran out. Theirs is so close a friendship that she posits ‘perhaps they were Christians once and had to convert’. Yet there are gaps in her story. She does not however talk about the events that forced her neighbours to leave, although she does admit that they ‘felt bad that we were living in Mustafa’s house and not paying the rent.’ Apparently they do not pay the rent because ‘perhaps the Turks from Turkey, those savages would not like it if Mustafa got money from a Greek Cypriot. Or if those TMT fanatics, like that Denktash, found out they would punish him’ (Papadakis, 2005, p.52). Autobiographical memory is expressed in so far as it fits the dominant collective narrative. The fractures and omissions in autobiographical narratives indicate those moments that the subject finds unspeakable, too traumatic to remember, if they are to maintain a secure position within the frame of dominant collective subjectivity and avoid questions around their own culpability.

Papadakis deconstructs whom the two official discourses define as refugees and the contrasting strategies of remembering and forgetting that the two communities practice. Mrs Kationou does not refer to her landlord and his family as refugees. An elderly Greek Cypriot couple complains bitterly, ‘we left our homes before 1960 when there was violence here, and again in 1964 when the place we had moved to became a Turkish Cypriot enclave. But our government never gave us any help, as if we were not refugees. Only the 1974 refugees get brand new houses. We don’t count as refugees’ (Papadakis, 2005, p. 149).<sup>103</sup> The official discourse of the unrecognized Turkish Cypriot state does not accord the refugee a similar sanctified status. Whilst the Greek Cypriot state performs mourning in a variety of ways,<sup>104</sup> a right wing

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<sup>103</sup> Papadakis explains here how displaced Turkish Cypriots are referred as ‘mutineers’ conspiring to destroy the Republic, whilst Greek Cypriots displaced before 1974 are referred to as ‘Tourkopolihtoi’ - ‘those struck by Turks’, refugee status is accorded only to those Greek Cypriots displaced in 1974.

<sup>104</sup> An example of this kind of performance is the ‘Women Walk Home’ movement led by Mrs Titina Loizido who began an annual attempt to walk across the border to homes lost in the 1974 invasion and occupation of the northern part of Cyprus. See <http://www.cyprus.com.cy/womenwalkhome.htm>.

Turkish Cypriot politician's response to Papadakis illustrates the policy of active forgetting of past personal loss (of property and missing persons) the Turkish Cypriot dominant discourse expects from its citizens: 'The thing that all your politicians say, that all refugees have to return, is impossible. We don't want to move back' (Papadakis, 2005, p.109).

Turkish Cypriots are not supposed to mourn what they have lost, or wish to return, because it is their civic duty to prefer the present situation. Turkish Cypriots are directed not to mourn their losses, but to remember them in order to prefer the present situation, to 'move on' not to move back. The Greek Cypriot citizen has a duty to actively mourn their loss because they are being denied what is rightfully theirs. Their civic duty is to demand full restitution. Both governments' resettlement policies, what Papadakis poetically calls 'the political management of ghosts', deny 'the right to choose one's home in the present and to choose how to think about one's home in the past' (Papadakis, 2005, p.150).

In his report for the International Peace Research Institute (Papadakis, 2008), Papadakis' compares mutually incompatible historical narratives which Greek and Turkish Cypriot school books present and contrasts them with the revised school books produced by the Turkish Cypriots under the aegis of the left-wing CTP (Turkish Republican Party) who sought to promote the reunification of the island and a Cyprocentric, rather than a Turkocentric, identity for Turkish Cypriots. The new school books presented 'a model of civic nationalism prioritizing the geopolitical space of Cyprus and expressing affinity with all its inhabitants, in the hope that a joint state would one day materialize...This is clear from the cover of the books showing Cyprus in outline, on its own, with no dividing line, in contrast to the Right's maps of Cyprus, which always portray a divided island with a part or the whole of Turkey

included in the map. The new books even critique the older ones for ‘teaching that Cyprus was a Turkish homeland.’ Despite strong initial objections by the Right and far Right, the new books, which aimed for ‘a change of the whole approach to history,’ were embraced by the public and students alike. The prefaces to the books state that they aim ‘to show the place of Cyprus in world history...creating thinking, questioning, responsible and active citizens... getting students interested in researching influences between different cultures and communities...viewing history from different sources, perspectives and facts... creating peace-loving citizens ‘ (Papadakis, 2008).

To this end the history books introduced by the Turkish Cypriots in 2004 rejected a narrativising model in the new history books, which

Lack a clearly defined central character (i.e., the nation) present from beginning to end. Not only is identity shown to change throughout history, but also ascriptions of identity now emerge as simplifications since they refer to internally differentiated groups with diverse political goals. This is a break with Anderson’s paradigmatic model of national history as the narrative ‘biography of nations’ and with the tendency of ‘reading nationalism genealogically (Papadakis, 2008).<sup>105</sup>

Narrativising strategies enable both the individual, and the state to produce memories that protect the individual or state ego. Freud delineates how the subconscious acts as a censor, and performs strategic forgettings in order to protect the ego, and how analysis might reveal those suppressions and omissions (Freud, 1899). Papadakis in turn examines how the state and dominant ideologies deploy memory and forgetting in order to protect the image of their community as the weaker (innocent) victim of a

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<sup>105</sup> Since the defeat of CTP in the elections April 2010, the new ruling party, the right wing UBP (National Unity Party) has expressed its intention to rewrite the history books once more, presumably in a more Nationalist vein (‘Threat to revert to the old version of Turkish Cypriot history books’ *The Free Library*, 2010) .

larger, hostile force (the Greek Cypriots and Turkey respectively); and how the analysis and deconstruction of these discourses reveal the violence and Othering these collective memories perform. The move to a deconstructed poetics of the fragment thus becomes a methodological imperative, necessary if we are to explore the silences and omissions and reveal the traces of the palimpsest in the narratives of collective and autobiographical memory in a Cypriot context.

### **Geographies of Exile**

Bryant's anthropological approach is less personal than Loizos', who situates himself as diasporal returner, as becoming-Cypriot as well as anthropologist, and Papadakis whose anthropological fieldwork reveals erasures and hidden silences in the historical narratives of his Greek Cypriot childhood. Bryant situates herself as living in Lapta/Lapithos, in northern Cyprus but does not reveal whether her connection to the island is purely academic and how her research is informed by her connection to the island. In *Pieces of The Past* (2010) Bryant moves between the collective memory practices Papadakis delineates and private memory practices, chiefly her subject Vasillis' map, drawn from memory, of Lapithos, the village he was exiled from by the Turkish invasion in 1974. Bryant reveals that she now lives in the neighbourhood but is silent on her complex and contingent belonging to Cyprus and to Lapithos. Her position in relation to Vasillis is as anthropologist and subject, but Bryant also acts as translator for him with Turkish Cypriots, and to some extent a reluctant go-between and protector in his futile and protracted attempts to move back to his home. Her book does indicate these complexities but Bryant is self-effacing in her methodology. The private map and its relation to wider social relations are at the centre of her work, but not her own personal Cypriot cartography or biography.



Vasillis' map is more than an artefact of memory; it charts his hopes of return. The opening of the border between the Republic of Cyprus and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus revives those hopes. Bryant, who now lives in the neighbourhood, visits the village with Vasillis and his wife and observes and interviews the couple and the people who now live in their homes. Bryant uses Halbwachs concept of social memory to explore the autobiographical, experienced and historical memory practices at play. The map reveals the lost village to be not only physical, in fact the returning refugee often finds the site of memory is often disappointing at first sight, the houses shrunken, uglified by the present, banalified by new inhabitants. The village, as Loizos observed, is a network of relations, which sustains a pastoral identity, made extinct through economic development, education and emigration as much as war. That network is transformed, deterritorialised where it has not been destroyed, so that it stretches from Cyprus to Australia, Britain, Greece and Turkey. Vasillis has lost the network of physically proximate, geographically situated, inter-dependent kin. Despite this he wants to return to the site of the map, even though the territory is lost.

Bryant traces the routes of memory, from Vasillis and Maroulla's autobiographical reminiscences, the politicised memory practices of the officially funded and sanctioned refugee groups in the Republic of Cyprus, and the memories of the present inhabitants of the village in order to understand both how the experience of inter-communal life and its dissolution is remembered now. Her conclusions are pessimistic, the opening of borders leads not to reconciliation but to the performance of mutually incompatible memory narratives that drive the two communities apart. It is not so much what is remembered as what is forgotten which is at stake. As far as Vasillis is concerned the situation before 1974 was satisfactory, he is still silent on, or blind to Turkish Cypriot memories of the 1963 privations of war and displacement.

The Turkish Cypriots of the village, in turn, are blind to the enormity of Vasillis' loss; have 'forgotten', thus erasing not just the village, but also the world he lived in before 1974.

### **The Cypriot Diaspora and Post Memory**

Papadakis' work reveals the silences within contested state narratives and the personal myths at play in Greek and Turkish Cypriot commemorations and performances of collective memory. Whilst there is an intimate relationship between individual and collective memory, and the former cannot exist without the framework of the latter, memories of lived events are open to re-evaluation and to change but there is no distance between individual and collective memory in the case of inherited memories, of second generation Cypriots born abroad. Waves of emigration from the late 1950s onwards mean that there are now more Cypriots living off the island than are resident in Cyprus (Canefe, 2002a). Loizos begins his anthropological journey in part impelled by the duty towards ancestral legacies, which is the hallmark of inherited memory. Loizos's 'return' to the island, his arrival as a young man, begins a life long complex relationship with Cyprus, and the memories of exile of the villagers of Argaki. All memory retains important inherited elements and narratives, but diasporic memory (often with frequent returns) gains a sense of distance that is analogous, but not identical to, what Marianne Hirsch Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University defines as postmemory. This is memory confined to a familial relation,

the particular relation to a parental past described, evoked, and analyzed in these works has come to be seen as a 'syndrome' of belated- ness or 'post-ness' and has been variously termed 'absent memory' (Fine 1988), 'inherited memory,' 'belated memory,' 'prosthetic memory' (Lury 1998, Landsberg

2004), 'mémoire trouée' (Raczymow 1994), 'mémoire des cendres' (Fresco 1984), 'vicarious witnessing' (Zeitlin 1998), 'received history' (Young 1997), and 'postmemory' (Hirsch, 2008, p.105).

The photographic image, and familial archives are central

as a medium of postmemory (that) clarifies the connection between familial and affiliative postmemory and the mechanisms by which public archives and institutions have been able both to re-embody and to reindividualize 'cultural/archival' memory. More than oral or written narratives, photographic images that survive massive devastation and outlive their subjects and owners function as ghostly revenants from an irretrievably lost past world (Hirsch, 2008, p.115).

Hirsch sees postmemory as facilitating and memorialising 'the pain of Others' (Hirsch, 2008, p.104) but who these Others are, and whether they are sanctified or excluded reifies the diasporic personal and political relation to and memories of Cyprus. Inherited memories produce Manichean collective memory-narratives that perpetuate intransigence, insularity, distrust and political deadlock in the Cypriot context rather than understand the suffering of the Other. Postmemory and the family photo album are bounded and confined by family loyalties, duties and hierarchies. The referendum for the Annan Plan in 2003 showed that greatest distrust of the Turkish Cypriot community came from young Greek Cypriots who have only inherited memories of an undivided island. The most resounding vote against the Annan Plan from the Greek Cypriot community didn't come from people who experienced the war in 1974: it came from Greek Cypriot youth – 79% of Greek Cypriots born after 1970 rejected the plan for unification. 73% of Turkish Cypriot youth voted yes, perhaps because they were voting against economic and political isolation and for entry into Europe, neither of which were a factor for Greek Cypriot

youth.<sup>106</sup> Greek Cypriot youth, were more likely to be preoccupied by the duties that inherited memory brings, to remember ‘our’ pain and thus to perpetuate fear and distrust. Inherited memory is immobile and unchangeable, a dead inheritance that is not able to change as living memory does, a structure rather than a movement. Postmemory is a burden of duty to memory for the diasporic and the young, an inherited story to be kept alive.

The digital realm and the sharing that the use of websites, whether commercial, social or creative like *MemoryMap*, breakdown the boundaries of the photograph album and the ritualistic performance of remembering through its pages. Through performance and interaction with the memorial practices of others postmemory can be unfixed from its ancestral confines so that it can become translocated, can become memory that acknowledges that postmemory is a theatre and ‘the performative index, shaped more and more by affect, need, and desire as time and distance attenuate the links to authenticity and ‘truth’’ (Hirsch, 2008, p.124).

In conclusion Loizos, Papadakis and Bryant identify a range of collective memory performances and discursive practices that unite and divide Cypriots. Tactical forgetting, the forgetting (and thus refusal) of the contested narratives of the Other, is consistently at the heart of that division. I situate my poetics and this reminiscence research project in relation to the reflexive turn in anthropology. The awareness that autoethnography and anthropoetics brings to bear on the relationship between the enunciation of one’s individual memories, memory practices and archives and collective memory practices is enacted through my writing<sup>107</sup> and through the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*, which in its complete iteration at

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<sup>106</sup> <http://www.electionguide.org/results.php?ID=961> accessed 24.03.2013

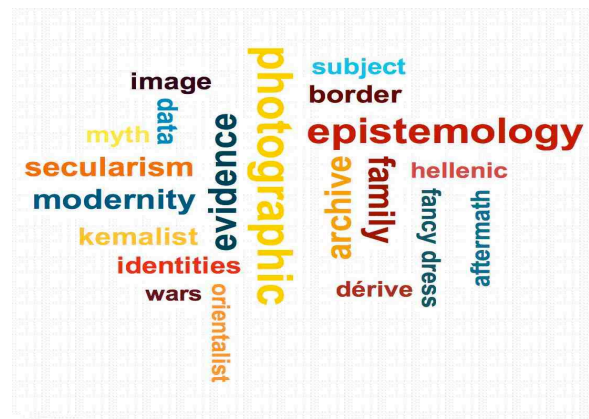
<sup>107</sup> See *Translating and Mutating Identities: Cypriots who write in English* in *The Archive of Lost Objects*, p.164-179.

Side Streets in 2011 embodied the situatedness of the cultural performance and produced space for a ‘mutant production of enunciation’ (Guattari, 1995, p.131) between ritual and theatre building deep connections with the audience of cross-border cultural producers with future collaborations across borders.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Conversations with audience members after the performance were instrumental in developing future collaborations, in the first instance with Professor Stephanides, Gur Genc and Dr. Stavros Karayanni (all guests at the performance) on a panel entitled *Gateways and Walls: Cypriot Poetry* at the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Conference at Bosphorous University, in May 2011. Another collaboration arising from the performance was my participation in *Palimpsest 2012*, an altered artist’s book exhibition with more than 30 participants from Cyprus and Germany exhibited in Nicosia and Dusseldorf. I was also invited to perform extracted reiterations of *Memory in the Dead Zone* the ARTos Foundation in 2012 as part of *Allios*, a bilingual (English and Greek) poetry performance in conjunction with Lily Michaelides, Pambos Kouzalis and John Mouskos).

## Chapter 7: Developing Identities in the Photographic Archive



Continuing to investigate the connections between autobiographical and collective modes of memory this chapter examines how the medium of photography and the photographic archive in its official, family and private iterations have shaped, performed and re-presented Cypriot identities. I explore the relationship between memory, photography and identity in the context of my Turkish Cypriot cultural identity and official familial and personal photographic practice. Informed by Foucault (2001) and Said's (1985) analysis of the discursive practices which emerge through public policy, political discourse, literature and art I examine how post-Ottoman Turkish Cypriot identity has been represented and created through photography. Contemporary photographic memory practices, particularly sharing photographs in the digital realm, disrupt the borders between private and official archives and collective and individual creative practice. I discuss how my website [www.memorymap.org.uk](http://www.memorymap.org.uk) speaks to these archives and creates a space for collaborative creative production around memory and fantasy.

## **The History of the Turkish Cypriot Photographic Subject**

Photography has played a key part in the formation and expression of modernity, serving as an evidentiary and memorial medium for the legal infrastructure, the media and the family. My approach integrates an examination of photographs from my own family archive in the context of documentary, art and studio images in order to consider both the social, and the personal significations that cohere around photographic representations of Cyprus and Cypriots. My family photographs and photographic practice reflect and refract the history of the negotiations implicit in the formation of a Turkish Cypriot subjectivity, and the part that photography has played in that process of identity formation. I then go on to consider my photographic practice and explore the extent to which the photographic *dérive* offers an alternative research methodology for exploring personal and social identity.

A studio portrait of my great grandfather Imam Mustafa Nuri Effendi has pride of place in both my parents' and my aunt's houses. The photograph in my aunt's house is a much larger and earlier print. The photograph shows its age and is deeply stained. The original photograph has been so heavily touched up, a black abstract perspective painted as a background, over exposed elements of the image clumsily traced over, that the image has become something between a photograph and a drawing, and has the unnatural stiffness of an icon. The portrait is undated but it is signed, as the work of N.A. Nicolaides, Famagusta. Ours was an old established land owning Famagusta family (though the family were forced to sell most of their properties in the difficult enclave years), and the fact the photograph was taken by a Greek Cypriot photographer confirms family testimony that prior to the nationalism and intercommunal division that flourished in the 1950s there was considerable

intercommunal interaction. The version of the photograph in my father's house is much later and smaller copy of the same image. This photograph has not been touched up, other than by painting white vignette around the Imam and this version of the image offers much more of the magic of photography, of time captured and frozen.



Figure 13. Imam Mustafa Nuri Effendi, 1915 Adiloglu family archive

This is a lighter image. Mustafa Nuri's features are clearer, his rather serious and studious gaze and pose calmer and less stiff. He is holding the Koran in his right hand, his left hand resting gently on his lap. There are flowers behind him, which look artificial, it is hard to tell as the vignette effect obscures the studio set, evades specificity and detail thereby emphasizing the totemic, function of the image. My father estimates that my great-grandfather would have been about forty years old when the photograph was taken, shortly before his incarceration in Kyrenia Castle by the British colonial authorities in 1916. Arrested under Emergency Laws for his



involvement in fundraising activities for the Ottomans, Mustafa Nuri Effendi was imprisoned for two years during the First World War by the British authorities.

This portrait, which acts as *the* originary image in the family archive for me, speaks both of continuity and the radical breaks and transformation in Turkish Cypriot identity in the last century. Mustafa Nuri was a poet, as is my father, and my aspirations to become a poet were given genealogical legitimacy by this talismanic portrait, by a family narrative which made poetry my legacy. The image affords me both a sense of continuity and destiny and also of a cultural breach and an unimaginable cultural distance between my great-grandfather and myself. It is ironic that whilst an image of Islamic devotion is a touchstone for our familial identity the family is not religious; in fact my father is a devout atheist. My great grandfather's poems are written in Ottoman Turkish using the Arabic alphabet, and hence his poetry and prison notebooks are unreadable to both my father and I, both literate only in post-Kemalist Turkish, which uses the Latin alphabet.

Mine is a border identity. To a large extent all Turkish Cypriot identities are border identities, bisected by highly contested literal and metaphorical boundaries that work to include and exclude them from Cypriot and mainland Turkish identity, marking them as peripheral, and often abject or problematic, in both contexts. I am the product of a marriage between a Turkish Cypriot writer and an English painter, which marks me out as an especially peripheral Cypriot subject. Having grown up with an interstitial identity, and spending my formative years in Cyprus, Turkey and Britain has made me aware of my role as an interpreter and cultural intermediary from an early age and made me aware of the violence and censorship of the insistence of competing claims of objective truth long before I was able to express or explore such ideas through academic discourse. Mustafa Nuri's prison notebooks, fashioned out of

and written on a bricolage of pages from *The War Pictorial* kindly given to the Imam as writing paper by one of the prison guards, are in this respect a clearer representation of the genealogy of my identity than the portrait of my great-grandfather.



Figure 14. Pages from Imam Mustafa Nuri's prison notebooks

British colonial rule is the ground of my identity, for the British served not only as jailors but also as educators in our family (both my father and I were educated in the British system), and it is my father's journey to England to study Law, which led to my existence. My Cypriot heritage is an unreadable palimpsest written in the margins and blank spaces of colonial identity. The palimpsest of the prison notebook serves as both sacred object in a personal archive, but also as a map of competing narratives, genealogical claims and loyalties. The pages speak of the slippage from official discourse to personal experience, and that these discourses whilst co-existing in the same conceptual space are often mutually incomprehensible. The notebooks represent the active, and creative, process of self-expression, of the mutability of cultural

identity and the negotiations and compromises inherent in the attempt at self-expression in challenging circumstances. Sadly Mustafa Nuri's health was never to recover from his time in prison and he died two years after his release, in his early forties. However his legacy lives on, in a portrait that performs our Muslim Ottoman origins and in the notebook which has served me as a key inspiration for my research, writing and visual work. My choice of an auto-ethnographic methodology, which interrupts official discursive practices, and of the experiential Debordian *dérive* (Debord, 1956) as a strategy for mapping the contradictory and often mutually incomprehensible points of view, emotions and impulses which are the ground of my Cypriot subjectivity, are strongly inspired by his prison notebook which, despite Mustafa Nuri's imprisonment make the most of the limited resources to hand to create an object that wanders across borders of art, poetry and photography. I use the word ground advisedly, for it is the militarized and border strewn territory of old Nicosia, where I grew up in the enclave years (1968-74) which I return to repeatedly to take photographs of indeterminate, often forbidden moments and objects, in contrast to the images in the family photograph album which do not venture into any forbidden zones and serves to archive collectively sanctioned achievements and family milestones such as births, graduations and weddings.

### **The Epistemology of the Image**

The photograph's historical claims to being a 'transparent' and evidentiary medium have made it a central memory technology of the twentieth century, both in terms of official collective memory practices (the images used to illustrate and support historical and political discourse) and private memory practices (like my photo album and the products of my *dérives*). Deleuze characterizes the photograph as a 'mould' of

time, which immobilizes the instant, and he highlights the limitations of photography, that it privileges a given point of view and in doing so creates and fixes an institutionalized subject. In his analysis of Bacon's oeuvre Deleuze contrasts, at the expense of photography, the possibilities of painting and photography.

We are besieged by photos which are illustrations, newspapers which are narratives, cinema-images, tele-images ... Here there is an experience which is very important for the painter: a whole category of things that one can term 'clichés' already occupy the canvas (Deleuze, 2004, p.57).

Deleuze is playing with language here, in French cliché signifies both the snapshot and stereotyped thought, both requiring minimal skill, time or effort, and freezing and limiting reality. Space is continuous and contiguous, exemplified by 'any-point-whatever' as the indivisibility of movement itself. Photography limits that perception, privileges certain views, of space and instants of time. Deleuze contrasts the photograph, a mould of space, with the cinematic shot, a mould of change. Whilst he sees the painting as providing the possibility of 'the adventure of the line', photography can only provide a tracing of the 'state of things' rather than a becoming.

The photograph presents a trace; the etymology of the word photography itself invites us to think of the medium as a way of tracing/writing memory with light. Freud compares memory formation to the child's toy, the mystic writing pad, where a pattern traced on a cellophane page leaves an impression on the wax slate beneath (Freud, 1925). The Mystic Writing Pad both allows for the newness of the blackboard of the slate wiped clean on the cellophane layer above, and also leaves marks in the wax layer below, as unconscious memory, beneath the surface of the page. 'The appearance and disappearance of the writing' is similar to 'the flickering-up and passing-away of consciousness in the process of perception' (Freud, 1925, p.30). In

*Writing and Difference* Derrida conceives of consciousness as a kind of writing, and of memory as consciousness. ‘Everything begins with reproduction. Always already: repositories of a meaning which was never present, whose signified presence is always reconstituted by deferment’ (Derrida, 1997, p.245). So, to paraphrase Derrida, writing (in this case with light) supplements perception before perception even appears to itself’ (Derrida, 1997, p.224). There is an always-already at work. The photograph does not simply present what it sees, it re-presents, re-members, erases and dismembers. The image reproduces what the photographer recognises.

### **The Cypriot Photographic Subject**

If we are to seek originary traces of Cyprus as the always-already photographic subject then it is instructive to look beyond the family archive and to examine the work of John Thomson.



Figure 15. *Native Group, Nicosia 1878* by John Thomson

John Thomson was at the height of his career as a photographer, with a distinguished reputation as travel photographer, notably for his documentation of his decade of travel in the Far East between 1862 and 1872, when he visited Cyprus in the autumn of 1878, upon the British taking over the island from the Ottomans on the 4th June of

that year. His intention was to photograph ‘views (as impartial as they were photographic) of whatever might prove interesting on the journey’ (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.xxii). There is both a conceptual, and a political contiguity between cartography and photography here. That Thomson’s trip is a part of the British desire to map and stock-take this new acquisition is explicit: in the same year the first modern map of Cyprus was commissioned and produced by H.H. Kitchener (Bekker-Nielsen, 2004, p.42). Thomson’s photographic record of his trip to Cyprus intended to make Cyprus visible to the British colonial gaze, to give the British reader ‘a fair notion of the topography of the country and its resources’. Thomson is here to see what the Empire has acquired and to record it, his photographs will ‘supply incontestable evidence of the present condition of Cyprus, they will also afford a source of comparison in after years, when, under the influence of British rule, the place has risen from its ruins’ (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.xxii). Kitchener met with more resistance than Thomson, ‘on one occasion villagers shot at Kitchener’s survey team’ (Bekker-Nielsen, 2004, p.42). The villagers perhaps surmised, correctly, that the survey was to be ‘the basis of the Revenue which, as you know, is really a land tax’ (Wolseley, 1878/1991). Cyprus and Cypriots signified a resource for the Empire. Thomson notes that the modern Cypriot (e) is ‘strong and nimble, affable and courteous, and has a frame whose power and development would adorn the ranks of the finest regiment’ (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.40). Photography naturalized and inscribed the colonial gaze,

Photography in partnership with the archive delineated the boundaries of what Benedict Anderson in relation to the printed word has termed an ‘imagined community’ through which a narrative of the nation and the self were installed’ (Cross and Peck, 2010, p.128).

Some new subjects were more elusive than others, ‘a friendly-disposed crowd of spectators had gathered round the mosque to witness the process of photographing the exterior of the building, and while pious Moslems held themselves aloof, a large number of native Greeks volunteered to sit for their portraits’ as can be seen in his portrait *Native Group, Nicosia 1878*<sup>109</sup> (Thomson, 1879/1985, p. 16). The beautiful portraits Thomson produced are also sociologically nuanced, like his previous photographic work in China and in London. He sees and records ‘the labouring class’, peasants, beggars, and the elderly. His vision is also framed and organized, like the work of photographers who were to follow in his footsteps, and of foreign artists who painted and drew the island (Severis, 2000), around two mythic aesthetic regimes: the nineteenth century European philhellenic gaze, which reads Cyprus as the terrain of Hellenic myth (Anderson, 1991, p.71) and the Orientalist gaze which sees a passive, perverse Other in the Ottoman or the Turk (Said, 1985). Echoes of Hellenic and Christian myth are sought, and found. In the text accompanying photograph 37 *Coming From the Well* Thomson notes that ‘the pose of the woman in the foreground was taken naturally, and yet she looks like the living model of some Greek statue which might have been found in the adjoining ruins of ancient Soli’ (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.37). There are Biblical references too, ‘these wells form, as they did in Jacob’s time, pleasant meeting places where young men and maidens gather together’ (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.37). Thomson records these mythic echoes in his photographs. He writes of them when they are visible, when sites/sights contradict his mythic vision, for instance the ‘poor makeshift abodes’ in Nicosia ‘are strangely at variance with relics of the ancient magnificence of Nicosia’ as he imagines them to have been. The splendid fantasy of ‘the chivalrous bands that followed in the train of

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<sup>109</sup> See Figure 15. on p.180.

the Lusignan princes' is contrasted with the shabby reality of 'the motley crowd that now-a-days passes to and fro through the massive archway' (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.11). The Orientalist Other is invoked to account for the disjuncture between what was imagined and what is perceived. The Moslems are 'languid', 'a military people', they are pervaded by Oriental fatalism and melancholy, 'one forlorn individual informed me that he had made arrangements for his funeral many years since, and that his chief wish was to mingle with the surrounding dust as speedily as possible. He was a Turk' (Thomson, 1879/1985, p.5).

These two mythic regimes of Hellenism and Orientalism as imagined and disseminated by means of mass communication in Europe after the advent of the printing press, the novel, the newspaper and photography on the Continent are brought to the island in 1878 and become central in the subsequent construction and re-articulation of Ottoman Christian and Moslem Cypriot subjectivities into Greek and Turkish Cypriot national identities. The composition of Greek national identity and consciousness, a direct product of the eighteenth century European print capitalism and the integration of Greece into the expanding European economy (Friedman 1994; Carras 2004), is mapped onto the Cypriot subject, and divides them into two categories, the Oriental Cypriot, relic of the Ottoman past, and Christian Cypriot, relic of a pagan Hellenic past. Both Thomson's portraits and landscapes, the spaces and the types that enunciate them, as well as his accompanying notes present Cyprus as the Orientalist ruin of Hellenic and Gothic splendour. Through Thomson's eyes the (Hellenic/Biblical/Gothic) long past is glorious, the (Ottoman) present-past derelict and impoverished, though charming, and the future is a dream of modernization and Europeanization under the British.



Foscolo and Papazian in Limassol opened the first commercial photographic studio in Cyprus in 1878. John P Foscolo a Smyrnan Franco-Levantine, and Mateos Papazian, from Ottoman Istanbul were invited to set up a studio by the British. Sir Robert Biddulph, the British High Commissioner appointed Foscolo as official photographer to the British Army in 1879 (Kaba, 2010, p.13). Foscolo documented the processes and landscapes of colonial settlement as well as running a successful studio. He developed a successful business producing postcards of his photographs of Cyprus, of ‘a tranquil environment, serene people, and peaceful lands all of which were icons of harmony and of course guarantee of sales’ (Kaba, 2007, p.31). Local Turkish Cypriot photographers Ahmet and Ismet Şevki followed in their footsteps less than a decade later. The couple set up the first Cypriot photographic studio at their home in Asmaalti in Nicosia in 1897 (Kaba, 2010, p.15). Kadir Kaba has undertaken meticulous historical research into the couple who pioneered local studio photography in Cyprus closely followed by the Greek Cypriot photographer Theodoulos N. Toufexis. Kaba’s research reveals that whilst the Turkish Cypriot community lagged significantly behind the Greek Cypriot community in terms of producing newspapers and using print to create a wider imagined community (Bryant, 2004, p.33) they swiftly embraced photography. A number of women found an arena for their creativity in photography, both as their husband’s assistant, like Ismet Şevki, or as independent photographers like her contemporary, Hatice Ali San (Kaba, 2010, p.20). Studio photography was widely embraced by Greek and Turkish Cypriots as an arena for the performance of the self, their modernity mythologized by the modernity of their self-presentation and by the medium itself (Haritou, 2000; Kaba, 2010).

In terms of the mythic tropes at work in the Occidental photographic gaze and representation of Cypriot identity little had changed by 1928. Take the example of the

work of Maynard Owen Williams in the *National Geographic*. Williams, a staff photographer and for many years chief foreign editors on the *National Geographic* from 1919-1953 (Bendavid, 2008), conveys the myth of Hellenism of the island with a beautiful young Helen, of Orientalism with the camel in Buyuk Han and the veiled women of Paphos. As Cross and Peck remind us, ‘photography and its archives are structured by remembrance and forgetting, in which certain futures are promised and others excluded’ (Cross and Peck, 2010, p.128). The wars, political and social upheavals that have ensued in the region in the intervening half-century are barely implicit in Williams’ work. Williams’ photographs continue to discern the same mythic archetypes. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the First World War, the Armenian massacres, the Greco- Turkish War, the Population Exchange between Greece and the new Republic of Turkey are not visible in these images, which are organized by myth, and are presented as timeless, outside history. Time insofar as it intrudes, does so only through the punctum of recorded light, a happenstance frozen gesture, fleeing history.

However, if we look at private images from the same period for instance in the published collections of Spyrou Haritou (2000), and Kadir Kaba (2010), the myth of modernity is much more to the fore in the organization and visualization of Cypriot identity. As the work of Philippou (2010), Karayanni (2006) and Papadakis (2006a) demonstrates the problem of defining Cypriot identities is not only the product of a colonial gaze but also one of local (competing) hegemonic discourses. We see geopolitical ripples invisible in Foscolo or Williams’ work in local vernacular photography. Older women in the family wear more modest, or traditional garb, and young Turkish Cypriot girls dressed in European fashion. The transition from the

clothes of the Ottoman era, the hijab, the fez, and the turban to a westernized Kemalist Turkish Cypriotness can be seen across the generation gap in a single image.



Figure 16. Cypriot family in Paphos 1920s, Haritou Collection

Even where the mother is still veiled, the young girl usually situated as the centre of attention asserts a very different femininity (Haritou, 2000, p.58; Kaba, 2010, p.115). Markers of religious difference are still visible, but they are not the binary opposition of Williams' images taken at the same time. The young, both Greek and Turkish Cypriot, all adhere to contemporary European fashion and are marked visually by modernity in vernacular photography. The images in the Haritou collection capture fantasies as well as aspirations and contain charming images from Greek Cypriot fancy dress parties. A Greek Cypriot couple wittily deploys Orientalism by arraying themselves in exotic fancy dress (Haritou, 2000, p.94). Hellenism is re-inscribed through collective re-enactments, and de-naturalized through its very assertion (Haritou, 2000, p.100-103).



Figure 17. Studio Portrait of Vedia Nidai, the Şevki Studio 1920  
Reproduced in Kaba, 2010.

The next image I'd like to discuss from my personal family archive, is a small dark image, it is a snapshot rather than a studio image and captures a fleeting moment rather than a ritual moment. The photograph shows seven adult men and three boys standing in front of the Gothic arches of the Lale Mustafa Pasha mosque in Famagusta (formerly Saint Nicolas Cathedral), sometime in the mid 1930s. They are all Turkish Cypriots and their clothes mark out their interpretations of that identity. The storms of history ripple within the personal images in the family archive. Two of the men, and the pubescent boy are wearing fezzes. Four of the men wear turbans that indicate their Islamic faith and status. The only man without a hat is my grandfather, Izzet Adiloglu, who in contrast to the rest of the group is wearing a three-piece suit and tie. He stares straight at the camera, a dapper gentleman with a walking stick and performs the latest interpretation of the Turkish Cypriot, no longer defined by his religion, but through national, modernist, occidental bourgeois aspirations. The camera does not capture the whole story.



Figure 18. Izzet Adiloglu and sons 1936 Adiloglu family archive

Izzet Bey was blinded by an accident at the age of twelve; he cannot meet the camera's gaze, or see the image it produces. The walking stick is a blind man's cane. Yet the differences and changes visible in the image were probably experienced in a much less dyadic fashion. A turbaned man smiles tenderly at the camera, his hand resting on my uncle Naim's shoulder. This tiny image freezes a moment when Turkish Cypriot identity was in the process of transformation. Ottoman Islamic Cypriot identity was being overwritten by a secular Kemalist Turkish Cypriot identity. The curly headed toddler in the dress coat is my father. He was to inherit both these Kemalist aspirations and to build a Turkish Cypriot identity that was most profoundly shaped by British colonial education and values. Because they tend to record threshold or exemplary moments the photograph album is an archive of the performance of socially sanctioned identity, it is profoundly political as well as personal.

Yet, the photograph is not an object; it is an idea (the photographic) that is used to create the object. The objects and cultural practices that arise out of the photographic are shaped and given meaning by the contexts and media of their production and consumption, and the traces and associations, the networks

constructed through these interactions. The studio images that we see seek to capture class, not the abject poor as Thomson or Williams portray but the nascent bourgeoisie of the island. Local studio photography creates the modern subject it memorializes (Kaba, 2010 p.88). Modernity's division of time is dependent on the *idea* of the photographic. The archive produces the events it records, just as technology becomes an extension of subjectivity (McLuhan, 1967/2001).

Photography became the metaphor for an objective perception that divided the world in an instant and privileged the view. The instant reflected the transition of public and private space from the open-endedness and continual change of duration to the staccato jerks of the modern, interchangeable moments that were coloured or filled by work or leisure (Sutton 2009, p. 69).

However the Hellenized and Turcophone Cypriot routes to modernity are not identical. Hellenic modernity brings with it a reaffirmed sense of belonging and racial identity, modernity and a new sense of the traditional come hand in hand. As Karayanni points out, 'The colonial move sees one of its multiple Cypriot manifestations in the revival of the 'traditional' that seeks to exoticize the domestic space for the native inhabitant and the visitor' (Thompson, Karayanni and Vassiliadou, 2004). The Hellenic conception of modernity has an always-already sense of both catching up with modernity and of being the source of modern civilization. Turcophone Cypriot subjects of the 1920s are in a flux of identity, their Ottoman identity problematized by Greek Cypriots, the British and the new Republic of Turkey. The task of learning to become a modern Turkish subject is explicit, to the extent that night schools were organized during the Ataturk revolution to teach the new language, to create new national subjects (Bryant, 2004, p.149). Turkish Cypriots who attained literacy after Ataturk's language revolution were exiled from their literary heritage; the written language of their parents became a foreign language to

them. Whether educated in the Turkish or British education system they were aware of ‘learning’ a cultural identity, of the distance between the official cultures of educational discourse and their demotic, quotidian domestic cultures.

The boundaries between Greek and Turkish Cypriots invoked by Williams’ use of Orientalized and Hellenized images are less visible, less absolute in the studio and private family photograph. The vast majority of Cypriots, irrespective of their ethnicity or cultural allegiances aspired to a Westernized performance of modernity (Philippou, 2010a), which is not to imply that local images present a ‘truer’ picture, or that the problems pertaining to the representation of Cypriot identities are solely, or mainly, a product of an external gaze (Karayanni, 2006; Philippou, 2010b). Most studio and domestic photographs make no effort to signify ethnicity, unless a religious ritual is being recorded.

Vernacular photographic practices capture local aspirations to education (posing with books as props), wealth (the bicycle, the car) and to an Occidental bourgeois ideal of nuclear family. (Haritou, 2000; Kaba, 2010). Whilst vernacular photography speaks of personal memory, it is still profoundly bound to the social. The family album is an institutional object; the photographs within signify some element of the institution of family, its rituals and gatherings, narratives of wealth, attainment, births, and weddings. The happy moment, the correct behaviour is archived. Drama is elsewhere. There are no representations of war in my family album. In image of an Adiloglu family gathering taken in 1963 a few months before conflict, one can’t tell whether my father, his older brother and their wives are Greek or Turkish Cypriot from their fashionable clothes, or the contemporary furniture. My parents are laughing as though they were sharing a joke. They are in the prime of life. A painting of the Tekke at Larnaca by İsmet Güney, who designed the flag of the newly declared and

already failing Republic, hangs behind them. Mustafa and Naim are posing with their foreign brides, Turkish and English, indicating an education, cultural ties abroad and that the space of Turkish Cypriot identity is cramped.



Figure 19. Naim and Mustafa Adiloglu and their wives 1963 Adiloglu family archive

### **Wars and Their Aftermath**

Whilst war is not shown, its aftermath can be seen in the family album, in the reunions that mark the dispersal of the family to Istanbul, London, Brussels, and Palo Alto. The family album is as much of a myth generator as the colonial gaze. Perhaps we must look to artistic strategies in order to deconstruct the mythic regimes inherent in the representation of Cypriot identity. Often that which is not directly shown or explicit can be more powerfully discerned in its absence. The work of the contemporary artist and photographer artist Jim Harold seeks to avoid the Scylla and Charybdis trap of visual (if not conceptual) Hellenized and Orientalized myth making, by avoiding photographing the Cypriot subject at all and by capturing landscapes devoid of any human presence. Jim Harold, an English artist who works in the media of photography, text, installation and sculpture, made a series of visits to Cyprus



between 1998 and 2005 in order to photograph the UN Buffer Zone, with the cooperation of UNFICYP. In an interview I conducted with the artist in 2006 Harold saw his work chiefly as a contemporary continuation or reflection upon the aftermath photography of James Fenton after the Crimean War. Harold is drawn to Fenton's deserted landscapes, where only additional textual information and knowledge of the historical context of the photograph enables us to understand that this has been the site of war. The site rather than sight of war, the aftermath rather than the event, is what engages Harold as a photographer. He has previously made work around the Russian/Finnish border and is interested in recording spaces that physically mark what he perceives to be East/West divides. Yet despite the evasion of visual myth Harold still characterized the border in Cyprus as one that marks out the border between Occident and Orient.

In relation to the representation of Cyprus, Harold contrasted his strategy for representing conflict and war with that of Don McCullin, whose image of a Cypriot woman's grief on learning of her husband's death won the 1964 World Press photo award. Jim Harold's photography is a visual critique of the 'high adrenaline war zone' gaze and explores the changing role of the photographer in relation to event, rejecting McCullin's strategy of capturing the moment and exploring the aftermath, the long term consequences of war. His images capture the *unheimlich* of the Dead Zone, which is not dead at all, but 'an extraordinary nature reserve, an Arcadian idyll' (Harold, 2006), a hoopoe flies across his line of vision, a moufflon crosses his path. 'A melancholy pervaded the land and the decaying villages had become painful pointers to the aestheticized 'romantic' ruin in Europe's romantic landscape art: that most moral reminder of human mortality' (Harold, 2006). The border is a landscape. There is a relationship between the landscape and the viewer, the landscape as Other

to the human, which both affirms and undermines the otherness of social territorialisation. This is a space of absence, uninhabited, yet marked by human presence.



Figure 20. Jim Harold Nicosia International Airport 2001

At the abandoned airport foxes and pigeons now inhabit the departure lounge, roost in Duty Free. ‘Everywhere, however, there is a palpable sense of watchfulness - not that of the Gods, but that of humans ... the landscape bears some, if not all, of the attributes, visually at least, associated with a tranquil and natural Idyll is in the circumstances both extraordinary and disconcerting’ (Harold, 2005). Hellenic and Orientalizing myth making is not apparent in the images but, as above, woven into the text that accompanies the images, ‘we were looking towards the east - the orient - across the bluest sea you can imagine’ (Harold, 2006). Harold invokes the ancient Gods in their Hellenized incarnations, a palpable but invisible haunting. The landscape images often speak of what Deleuze and Guattari call ‘smooth space’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.493). In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between what they call smooth space and striated space deploying a

philosophical terminology derived from mathematics. This distinction coincides with parallel distinctions they draw between the space of the war machine and the space of the state apparatus. While Deleuze and Guattari consider these two spaces to differ fundamentally in nature, they also believe that the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture. What is not seen in Harold's images are the organizing gazes of the military presences, the Greek National Guard, Turkish armed forces and the UN forces, who understudy for the gaze of the Gods in this most surveilled of zones. This is a space governed by the gaze of the war machine, instituted by a military apparatus.

What makes these images compelling is how they seem to inhabit the tension between movement, which offers the potential of transformation and the centralized rule bound systems that have created and dominate that frozen, stilled space. The Buffer Zone provides a bounded stage, a mise en scene for Harold's photographic exploration of borders between east and west, human and non-human, absence and presence, war and peace. Whilst the tension between the nomadic, haptic disorientating space and regulated institutional space is there we are also made aware that the camera Harold is wielding sees from an institutionally elevated and privileged position. The artist may see, may re-member the space that the citizen is forbidden to gaze upon.

There is a contrast between the view point Harold takes, from above, as a species of space (he has also documented the Russian/Finnish border) and my walks along the border in Nicosia, as my birthplace and childhood home. The border is both a site of war and my originary space. Whereas Harold speaks of the eternal my photographic walks, conducted between 2006 and 2011 document a changing landscape. In his essay *Walking in the City* De Certeau contrasts the god-like voyeurism that the aerial view affords and 'the ordinary practitioners of the city (who) live 'down below', below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an

elementary form of the experience of the city ‘ I am a walker following ‘ the thicks and thins of an urban text’ that I ‘write without being able to read’. The abject nature of the Dead Zone is made explicit in the sexual graffiti that adorns the landscape. Like Mustafa Nuri’s notebook my walks inscribe an unreadable palimpsest. ‘The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognizable poem in which each body is an element signed by many others, elude legibility’ (De Certeau, 1988, p.93). There is an eternal return to myth in photographic representations and re-enactments of Turkish Cypriot identity whether in the family archive, or through the cartographic gaze of Thomson and Williams, the picturesque early touristic gaze of Foscolo, the artist’s gaze in Harold’s work, the war reporter’s gaze in Don McCullin’s and the vernacular gaze of local studio photography. The border is the terrain where mutually incompatible, competing myths become a rich palimpsest of contested Cypriot identities.

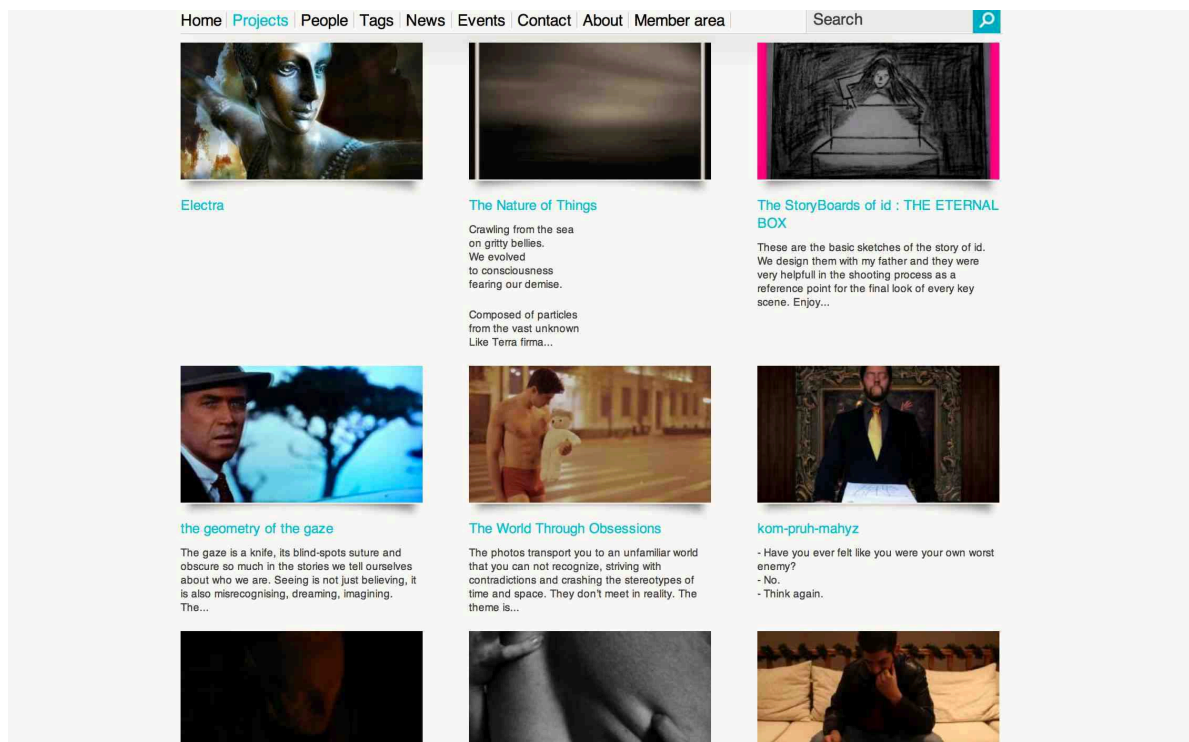
### **The MemoryMap**

The role of the photographic as medium and archive has been transformed and subsumed through both the digital modes of photographic production and the dissemination and consumption of those images in digital environments. The navigation of web services and digital interfaces have the potential to transform the experience of reminiscence, not merely the representation of memory (Manovich, 2002, Van Dijck, 2007). Digital interfaces have the potential to create and interrogate virtual spaces that create links between diverse voices, databases and archives, providing a possible architecture for an active and creative interface which enables participants to discuss, disrupt and accommodate the multiple and mutable narratives produced by collective archiving. Archiving in the digital realm affords us the

possibility to use the multiple choices for moving navigating our way through that archive affords us the opportunity to move from story to theme through accessing related content or exploring works grouped together through semantic tags. The digital archive allows us to move to diffused, deconstructive and multiple drifts and reveries through our own and others' images, writing and memories, thus affording the potential for collaborative and individual memory-works to co-exist and converse. The digital realm affords us both the ability to archive as never before, to link those archives with those of others in fluid and malleable conversations.

I created the website *MemoryMap*, [www.memorymap.org.uk](http://www.memorymap.org.uk), in order to explore how digital archiving and digital connectivity blur and recreate the boundaries between individual and collective memory and transform the landscape of photographic memory practice in relation to my project and creative practice. In order to archive the proliferation of objects, drawings, collages, writing, photographs, digital images, music and film clips that arose out of the process of remembering, and of speaking back to the archive I decided to create a digital archive – a website. Digital convergence allows us both the capacity to archive as never before, yet this is an archive of dematerialised objects, the representation of the object, not the object itself. *MemoryMap* was designed to serve as both digital archive and 21st century memory box, but whereas the memory box is a private practice, the digital memory box is a public arena and whereas the memory box is a collection of tangible objects the digital memory box is insubstantial. Both are vulnerable to loss and corruption. However on the website the projects are not locked in individual boxes, they are in conversation with other projects, there are opportunities on every page that make happenstance connections across my projects and with the work of others on the website. A connective and mutable cartography emerges out of the relationship

between my work and that of other contributors to this collective archive. The shared tags arising from all the projects on the website becomes a potential generator of poetry through the tag page. A virtual, collective space for uploading individual reminiscences and create work in a range of media, from music to moving image, *MemoryMap* creates links between diverse voices and artefacts through digital and face to face creative projects by participants, which are archived on the site.



**Figure 21.** Screenshot of MemoryMap projects page

I worked with web designer Kieran McMillan on the architecture and aesthetics of MemoryMap. He coordinated all technical aspects of the website and helped me to clarify the functionality I required from the website. My first priority was to create a collective archive as a navigable terrain. I have engaged heavily with image sharing on the website *Flickr* since October 2006 and as well as archiving and sharing my work on the site I have monitored and participated in the creation of ‘pools’ of images around Cyprus. I wanted to create a non-commercial bounded space to engage with the concept of memory-mapping, that is archiving different contributors’ memories

and creating a map of their multiple connections and cultural and geographic span. My second priority was to create a multimedia space that had the capacity to contain moving and still images, written texts, sound files and film and juxtapose them on the same page, as a digital scrapbook or memory box. My third priority was to provide an exhibition space for each user whilst also ensuring that the individual's work became reconfigured as part of the site's assemblage and that the works on the site spoke to each other, that one was offered a way of navigating the site which encourages reverie and distraction, moving to other user's images, projects and events.

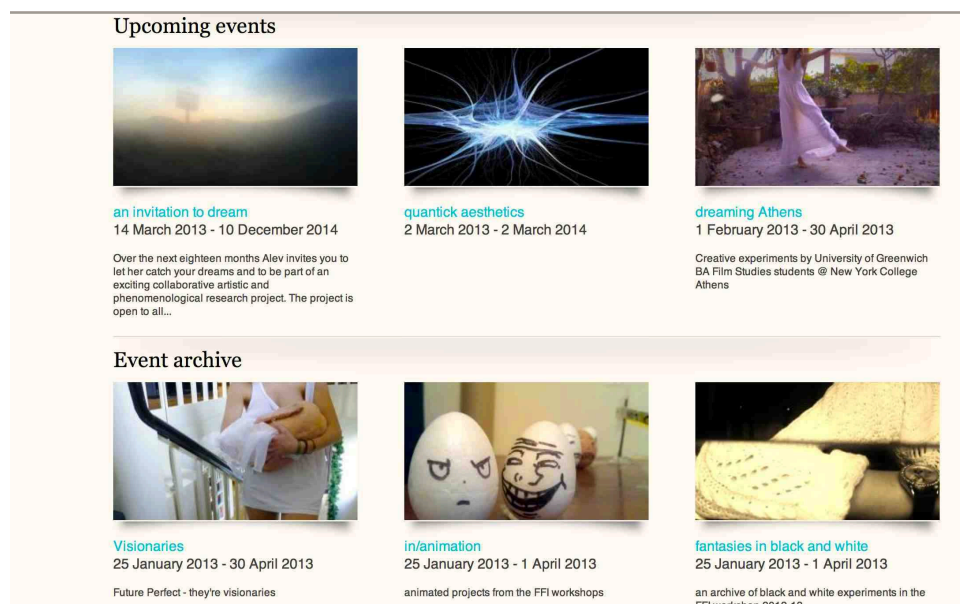


Figure 22. Screenshot of MemoryMap events page

Bearing these priorities in mind Kieran deployed *Drupal*, an open source content management system, to develop a site that enables each user to upload Word files, PDF files, jpegs and mp3s and links to film on *YouTube* and *Vimeo*. Each project can be geo-tagged and also semantically tagged. Each user has a profile page. Work is uploaded into a 'project', an individual digital portfolio. The users' projects are represented by icons at the bottom of their pages and are also featured on the projects page. The projects are incorporated into a changing mosaic on the home page, which



also shows a map of the projects' locations. Projects are also formed into 'events'. An event is created either virtually, in order to exhibit a series of projects or to archive the output of creative workshops.

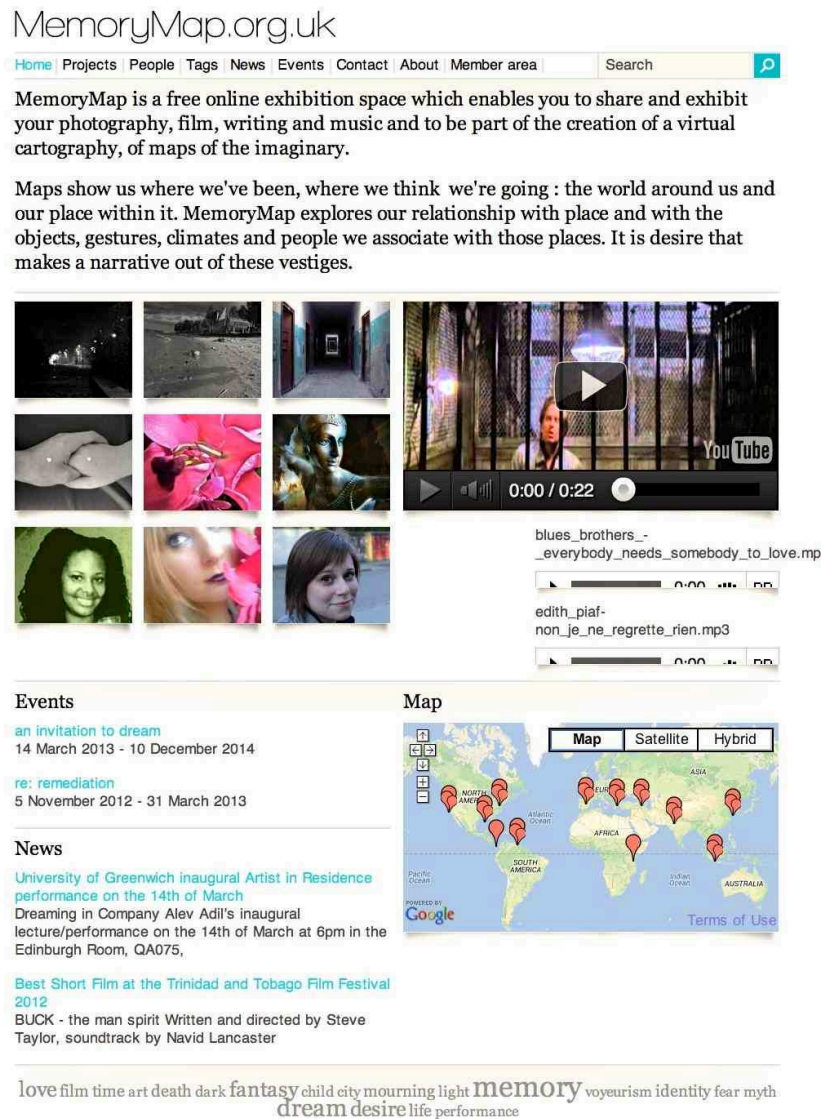


Figure 23. Screenshot of MemoryMap home page

Connectivity is built into the design of the site both through the home page, which produces a random assemblage of images, films and music through which to enter projects, and through the allusive progress the architecture of the site offers. On the home page one can enter projects by clicking on the map or on any image on the screen. Alternately one can move on to the 'project', 'people' or 'events' tabs at the





Inspired by Chris Marker's 1998 CD-ROM *Immemory* and his subsequent work on *Second Life*,<sup>112</sup> I had many ideas for how I might represent the imaginary spaces of Hotel Amnesia and the Dead Zone and to explore the creative potential of interactive and digital concrete poetry. The Atlas Group's website,<sup>113</sup> a fictional archive relating to the Lebanese civil war. The Atlas Group, 'founded' or created by Walid Raad in Beirut in 1999, is an imaginary foundation whose purpose is to research and document Lebanon during the civil war from 1975 to 1991. The Atlas Group produces an archive of largely fictional objects, of photographs, films, videos, notebooks, sculptures, and texts.<sup>114</sup> All of the documents in the archive are accompanied by texts that establish their provenance, yet everything is in fact Raad's work. Raad performs the work by publishing and appearing as his fictive alter ego, as a representative of the foundation, discussing the Group's history, activities and collections. Raad's artistic persona inhabits the same indeterminate space between fact and fiction as his work. The relay between appropriated fact and fiction allows him to consider both the mystery and the inadequacy of the archive, especially in relation to the memory of trauma. The Atlas Group asserts that they are 'not concerned with facts if facts are considered to be self-evident objects always present in the world' (The Atlas Group, 2006). However although I admired and was inspired

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<sup>112</sup> At his 2008 exhibition *Chris Marker. A Farewell to Movies* at the Museum of Design in Zurich, Marker presented a series of exhibits contained within a virtual museum designed by Max Moswitzer and Margarete Jahrmann, and created in the interactive virtual world *Second Life*. Marker's virtual museum hovers above the virtual archipelago Ouvroir, an enigmatic and uncanny topography. See <http://secondlife.com/destination/ouvroir-chris-marker>

<sup>113</sup> Raad's website and digital archive for the project can be seen at <http://www.theatlasgroup.org/>

<sup>114</sup> The documents in the collection are classified into three categories. Type A are attributed to fictitious individuals and organisations. Type FD are attributed to anonymous individuals and organisations. Type AGP documents are attributed to The Atlas Group, such as the series *The Thin Neck File*, which uses video, photography and mixed media to record the foundation's ongoing investigation of each of the 245 car bombs detonated in Beirut between 1975 and 1991 (<http://www.theatlasgroup.org/data/TypeAGP.html> accessed at 02.01.2011).

by the digital approaches of both Marker<sup>115</sup> and the Atlas Group, unlike their sites my priority was not to represent or build a digital archive of my memories alone but to subsume, disassemble and re-assemble my memories with those of others.

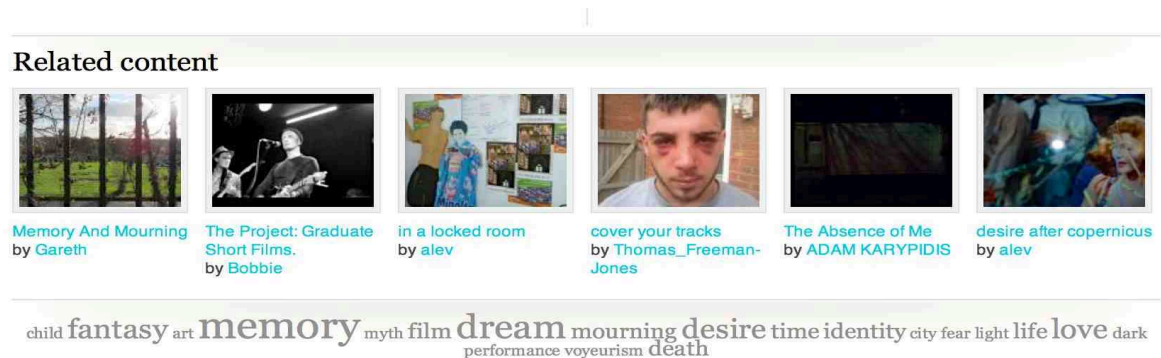


Figure 25. Screenshot of related content to projects

The design for the site was driven by these functional priorities, so in order to ensure that the space was easy to use and navigate, that the site provided a flattering format for individuals' project and profile pages I decided upon a clean and neutral design. Creating a translocatory shared space meant that it had to have the smooth functionality of a public space, rather than the aesthetic particularity of a single user website. However Marker's *Second Life* archive and The Atlas Group's fictional archive website are important digital antecedents for considering how to present and exhibit the archive of made and found objects and documents which I created as part of the project within the 'event' *Memory in the Dead Zone* and to create possibilities of navigation or drift through the site which produces a new form of expanded life writing.

<sup>115</sup> The project pays explicit visual homage to Marker through continuing his engagement with Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and through the repeated use of an image from *La Jetée* (1962) in the DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting* and on website project *archive of the lost object* at [www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/archive-lost-object](http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/archive-lost-object).

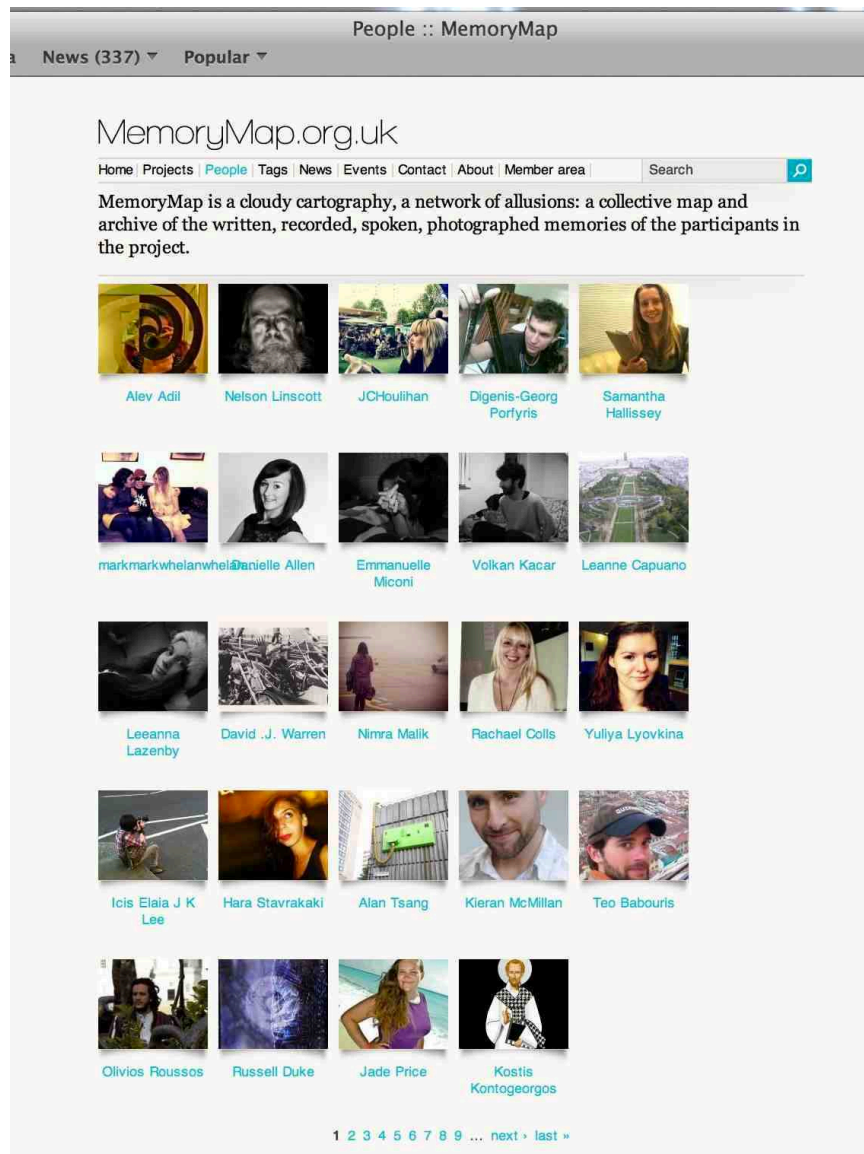


Figure 26. Screenshot of MemoryMap people page, showing most recent users to log in

## The Archive: Documentation of the Practice

The site serves as an archive for the practice element of my thesis. My work on the site documents and archives aspects of all the practice related specifically to this research at the ‘event’ *Memory in the Dead Zone* which can be seen at <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/events/memory-dead-zone> as separate projects. ‘Projects’ serve as 21st century memory boxes, relatives of the scrapbook and photo album. However where materiality is key to the memory box, the ‘loss’ or

dematerialisation of the object is at the heart of the digital archive. This sense of an archive of 'lost' objects, of an archive of absence was the inspiration for the title of the poetry book.

The archive of the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event consists of 26 projects which document the performance, records of my drifts, my notebooks, altered books and objects through 588 photographs and 47 texts produced by me and 27 tracks of music by other artists, one recorded interview and 41 links to videos (some of my own performances and also clips by others) on YouTube and Vimeo.<sup>116</sup> The first six projects document my performance at Side Streets in April 2011,<sup>117</sup> the installation of the recorded elements of the performance at the Duveen Gallery, Tate Britain in November 2011,<sup>118</sup> from my performance at ARTos in March 2012<sup>119</sup> and my preparatory performance of the first scene of *Memory in the Dead Zone*, performed as part of the University of Greenwich/Birkbeck College Cross Genre Experimental Poetry Conference and Festival in July 2010.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> The texts archived on the site are the script for the Memory in the Dead Zone performance at Side Streets, the script for the performance at ARTos, press coverage for the ARTos performance, translations of the ARTos performance poems into Greek, notes for a lecture/ performance 'Topography of the Text', 36 poems, 3 autoethnographic essays, 'On Freud's Screen Memories' and 'Translating and Mutating Identities', and 'Fragments of Forgetting', two texts by Freud, a letter and an extract on the Mystic Writing Pad, and an article about the Freud Collection.

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/performing-memory-dead-zone>

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/jocastas-dream>

<sup>119</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/alev-artos-foundation> shows 12 images from and also contains the script for that performance, Greek translations of the poems performed and publicity relating to the event.

<sup>120</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/time-machine> and <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/another-time-machine>

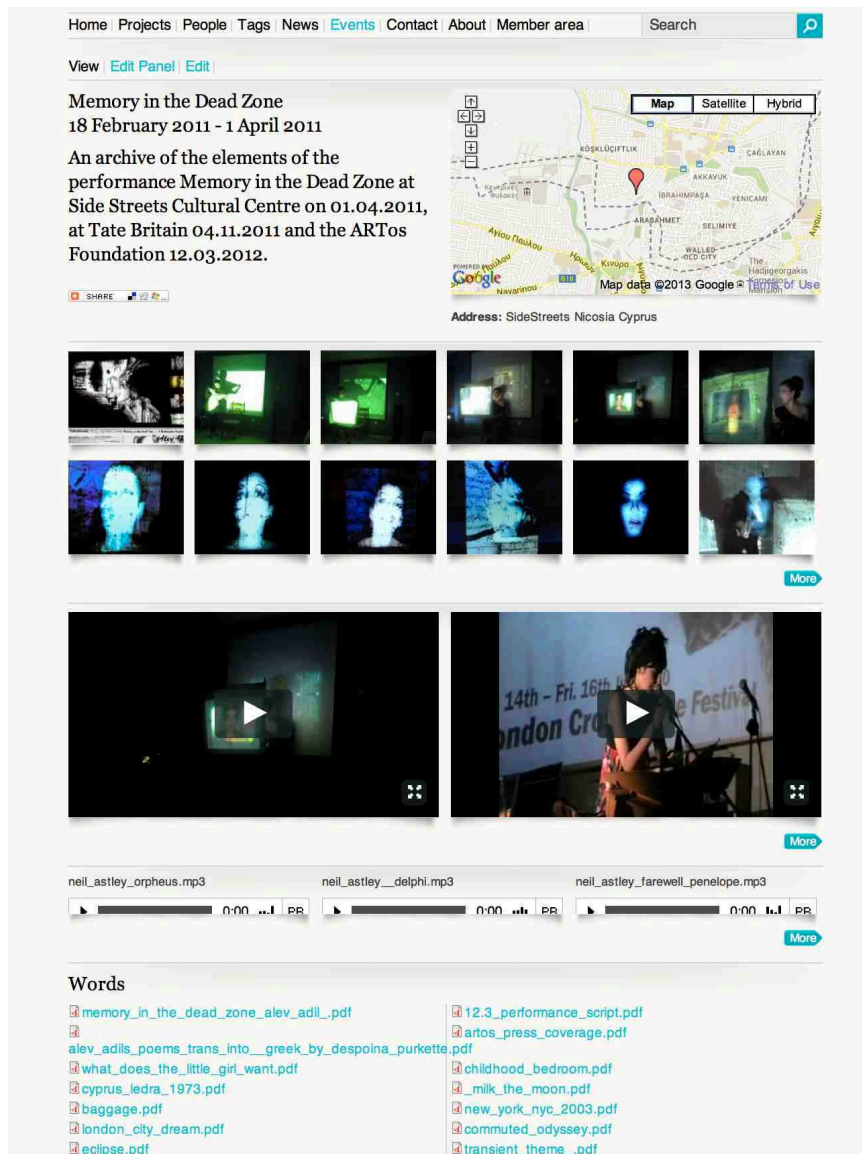


Figure 27. Screenshot of the event *Memory in the Dead Zone*

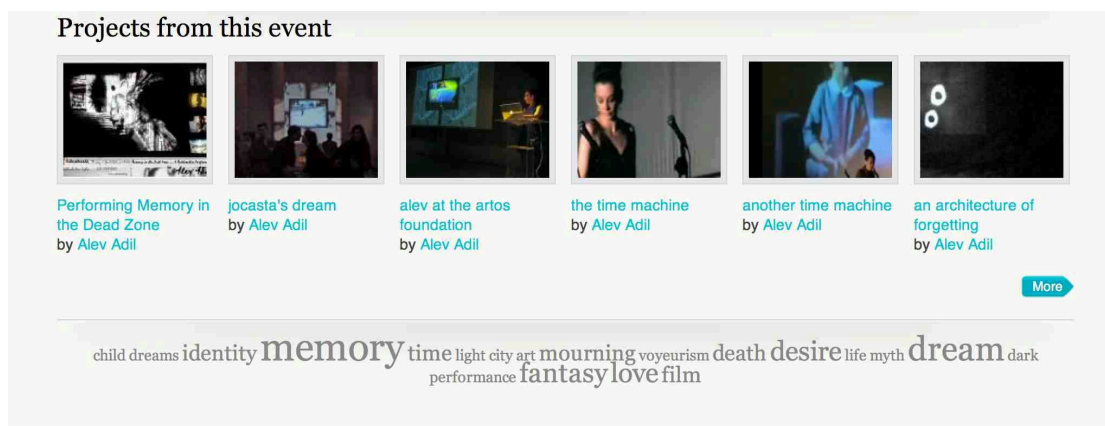


Figure 28. The first six projects in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event.



The event provides the most comprehensive public archive of all the elements of my practice exploring memories of the Dead Zone.

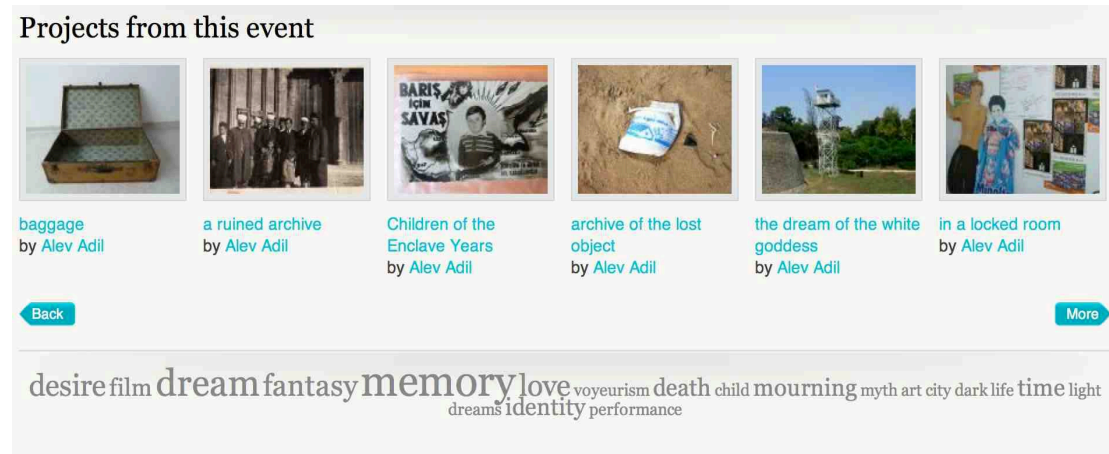


Figure 29. The second six projects in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event

Studio projections and preparations for the performance are also archived on the site.<sup>121</sup> Objects and media connected to the performance are interrogated in the project *Baggage*.<sup>122</sup> The project *a ruined archive*<sup>123</sup> illustrates the different form that the family photograph album can take in digital landscapes, blending the private and the public with remediations of family and contemporary press photographs presented with images by John Thomson and from *The National Geographic* archive. *Children of the Enclave Years* presents remediations of the photographer Mehmet Şik's images of Turkish Cypriot children in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>124</sup> The documentation of my derives in Dead Zone are archived at the *dream of the white goddess*,<sup>125</sup> *memories and moments*,<sup>126</sup> *stolen time*<sup>127</sup> and *Amnesia and the ghosts of time stopped*

<sup>121</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/architecture-forgetting>

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/baggage>

<sup>123</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/ruined-archive>

<sup>124</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/children-enclave-years>

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/dream-white-goddess>

<sup>126</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/memories-and-moments>

<sup>127</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/stolen-time>

streets<sup>128</sup> as is my work with notebooks and maps,<sup>129</sup> altered books<sup>130</sup> and toys.<sup>131</sup>

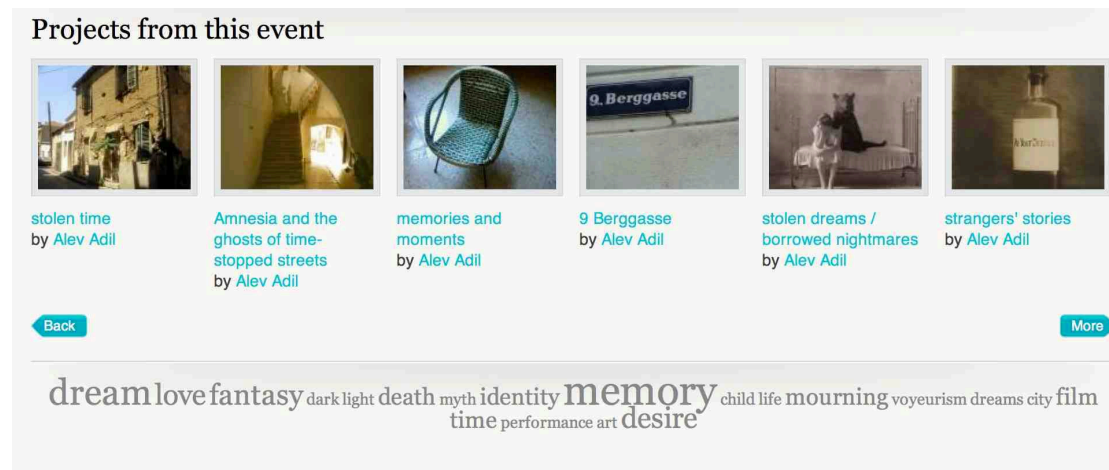


Figure 30. The third six projects in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event

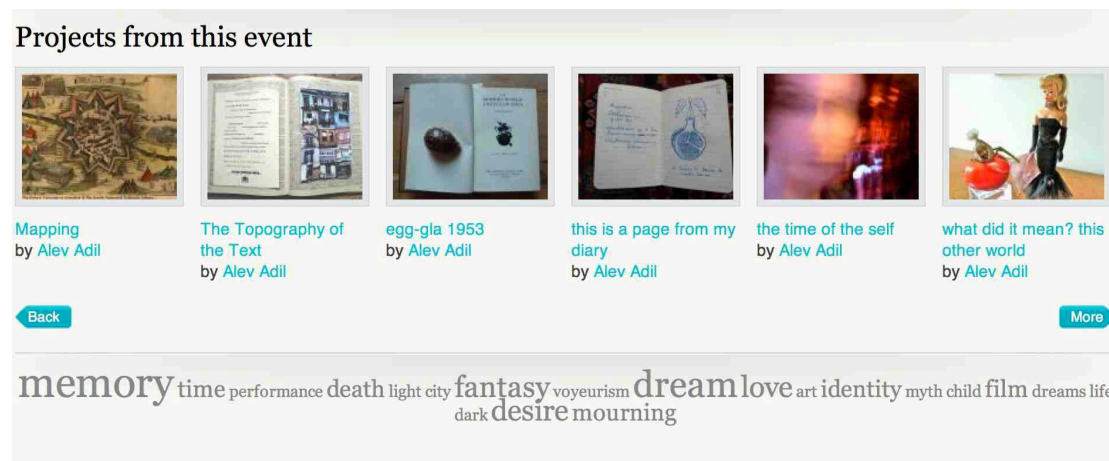


Figure 31. The fourth six projects in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event



Figure 32. The final two projects in the *Memory in the Dead Zone* event

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/amnesia-and-ghosts-time-stopped-streets>

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/mapping> , <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/page-my-diary> and <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/topography-text>

<sup>130</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/egg-gla-1953>

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.memorymap.org.uk/projects/what-did-it-mean-other-world>



The website provides a mutable and contingent, but nevertheless extensive, archive of material relating to the book, performances, DVD and of my border drifts in the event *Memory in the Dead Zone*. The live performances, book, photo essays and website all repeat elements of the archive generated by my drifts. However all the forms of the creative practice contain content unique to that format as well as images and texts that are echoed and evoked (remembered) across all the platforms of dissemination. These repetitions are experienced differently depending on their discursive mode, their context, their conjunction with other texts and media and the medium of communication. This archive of becoming-Cypriot proceeds through the Deleuzean premise that difference arises out of repetition, through a single substance expressed through multiplicity. The event provides an archive of memory, of an autobiographical journey rather than of Cyprus.

### **The Digital Archive as Performance: Documenting the Drift**

Throughout the creative process space and movement through space has been central, prowling the terrain of the dead zone on foot and in memory. The website allows for the material produced through these moves to be incorporated in one space through digital convergence. That digital convergence comes at a price, the price of desubstantiation. The digital signifier replaces and memorialises the loss of the object, rather than the object itself. In that respect digital archiving, like memory, records the absence of the moment or the object rather than the object itself. Given the subject matter at hand this is an advantage rather than a limitation. The memory map is an archive of lost objects but it is more than that. This is a mutable space, a shifting terrain and territory rather than a secure and bounded repository. Each journey through the space offers multiple experiences, options and opportunities.

One example of a drift, through my own work on the site is presented in the DVD *MemoryMap Drift* to illustrate the possibilities of experiencing a deconstructed autobiography and of using a website both as a digital memory box and as a tool for performing expanded life writing. In the context of the website the archive is created by the journey taken through it. The total digital information contained on the website up to the 04.04.2013 is contained on three back up DVDs as individual files. This is a very different, much more limited archive than the live website. Without the architecture of the website's content management system it is not possible to ascertain which information belongs to whom, or to examine files simultaneously. The architecture of the website, both the modes of moving through the site and the projects and events created, altered and erased by participants makes the archive possible. The experience of moving through and interacting with this changing landscape brings the archive to life and makes that journey a performance.

*MemoryMap Drift* is an unedited documentation of one such performance or drift through the website. In order to demonstrate the potential for a different kind of memory practice this drift is autobiographical and concentrates on my own work. Each interaction with the website will be very different and the majority of journeys on the website are under 5 minutes duration and so this is not intended to be a typical drift through the site. One of the media specific pleasures of interacting with the website is that it is an active experience with a myriad of choices. Watching a journey through the site is not an experience that is natural for the medium. In order to give the film a sense of flow I have emphasised the auditory potential of the website with a soundscape of mainly Greek, Turkish and French pop songs from 1960s and 70s, juxtaposed with recordings of my performances and interviews.

The film begins on the home page and enters the project, *amnesia and the*

*ghosts of time-stopped streets* through the map. The still images of the project are viewed with a simultaneous soundtrack of a recording of my response to a speech in the House of Commons and Ajda Pekkan and Enrico Macias, the French ‘Pied Noir’ singer performing *Hoşgör Sen*, a Turkish cover of the French song *On S’embrasse Et On Oublie*.<sup>132</sup> The project leads to the *archive of the lost object* which provides another slide show to accompaniment of contemporary artist Candan Erçetin covering *Hier Encore* in an homage to singers of Ajda’s generation and the Francophilia of Turkish pop music of the time. Thus the soundtrack to this digital reverie speaks of music as a way of evoking memory but also of the way music speaks to its own history through reappropriation and homage.

Proceeding through the event *Memory in the Dead Zone* the film leads us to the project *mapping* which reproduces historical maps and my private cartographies with a muted soundtrack of a recording of a TRT<sup>133</sup> television interview with me in Turkish and the iconic 60s Turkish film star Türkan Şoray singing (or rather miming to Belkıs Özener singing) *Herşey Bitmiştir Artık* (*Everything is Over Now*) in the 1971 film *Melek Mi Şeytan Mı?*

*performing memory in the dead zone* is a slide show of images from my Side Streets performance in 2011 with filmed footage of an extract. *time machine* and *another time machine* presents slide shows of still images, screen captures from my performance at the Experimental Poetry Festival at the University of Greenwich in 2010, with video extracts from that performance of my performance of the poem *Read My Other Letter*, the Greek group Aphrodite’s Child performing *End of the World* and

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<sup>132</sup> Ajda Pekkan has been the superstar of the Turkish pop scene since the mid60s. She is famous for her Turkish covers of European and American hits such as *Charade*, *Parole* and *Bang Bang, My Baby Shot Me Down*. Her *Tanrı Misafiri* (*God’s Guest*) is sampled on the soundtrack to the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*.

<sup>133</sup> TRT, Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu, the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation is the Turkish state broadcasting equivalent to the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Steve Kennedy's original musical composition. Another remediation of my 2011 performance is presented in *an architecture of forgetting* with still images of the projection for the second act of the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone* with the overture from Gluck's 1762 opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*. In contrast to this classical interlude the next project of photographs of children by the photographer Mehmet Şik is accompanied by another return to musical reappropriation with Scott Walker's *Sons of*, a translation and reinterpretation of Jacques Brel's *Fils de*.

The journey through the site proceeds with a more music from Candan Erçetin, her original composition *Parçalandım (Torn Apart)* and images from my border walks in *dream of the white goddess* and her cover of *Parole* played simultaneously with Derrida speaking about writing as we proceed through a series of images in *The Topography of the Text*. The *zembeikiko* from the 1971 Greek film *Evdokia* is played over *memories and moments* of Turkish Cypriot experience. *The Train of the Damned* presents an audio piece that interweaves my voice with that of MemoryMap contributor Mark Whelan in echoing refrain and explores the possibilities for presenting poetry off the page. The differences and similarities between the traditional family album and memory box and their digital counterparts are explored in the rather dissonant soundtrack the website provides for family photographs when both songs are played at once. The plaintive *If You Want Me to Stay*, recorded in 1973 by Sly and the Family Stone, chosen both for its date and subject matter, is played at the same time as Natacha Atlas' orientalist rendition of the 1964 Francois Hardy hit *Mon Amie La Rose*. The local and temporal specificity of the images are translocated through music that commemorates the dates of war, and develops a theme of dissonance and reappropriation. The film closes with the project *future now* an international drift in the present and an intergenerational soundtrack

that blends Serge Gainsbourg's homage to Jane Birkin *Jane dans la Nuit* with their daughter Charlotte Gainsbourg's song 5.55.

*MemoryMap Drift* shows many images that familiar to the viewer of the film poems in *An Architecture of Forgetting* and the performance *Memory in the Dead Zone*. The repetition of elements elicits reminiscence in the viewer, whilst new material and many different options for navigating the site enlarge and transform the affect of individual elements of the project.

### **Analysing Digital Interaction**

*MemoryMap* serves as much more than an archive of creative practice for this research. As discussed earlier I wanted to explore how collaborative archiving framed and changed my memory practice and placed it in conversation with others' creative practice. The website developed as a collaborative archive through creative interaction. I used *MemoryMap* as a platform for face-to-face creative workshops on autobiography, memory and mediation with undergraduate and postgraduate students in London, Athens and Trinidad. The participants in those workshops comprise 70% of the site's 265 members and account for the traffic to date from Trinidad (590 visits) and Greece (1,282 visits). *MemoryMap* went live 08.01.2011. By 04.04.2013 265 members of *MemoryMap* had contributed 720 projects to the site.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> This includes 81 of my own projects.

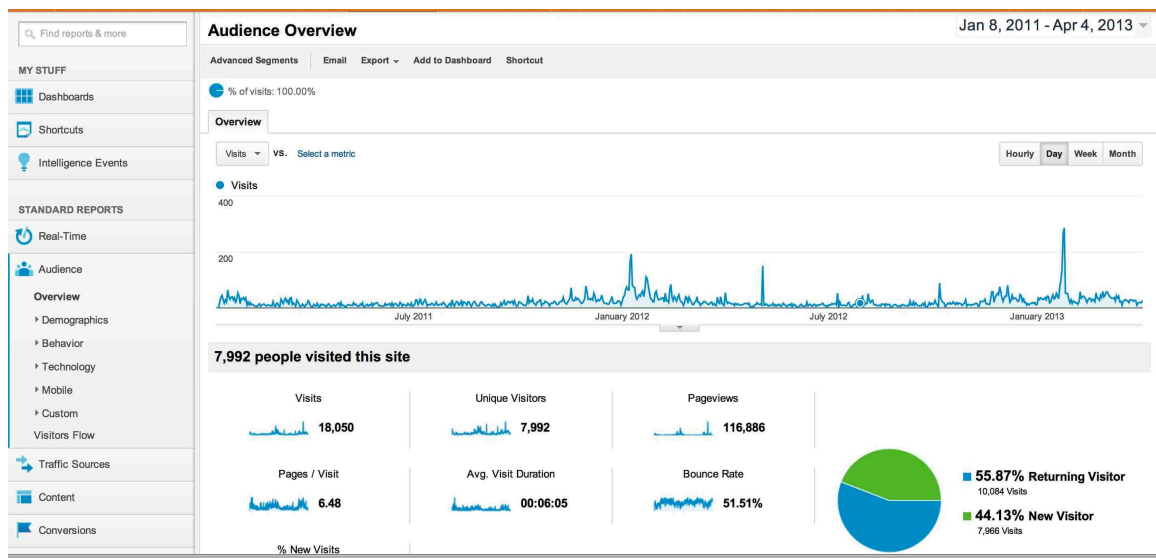


Figure 33. Google Analytics audience overview January 2011-April 2013

Excluding my projects this indicates that users have contributed an average of just over two projects each to the site. The site has a global reach, and has thus far been accessed from 96 countries. The UK accounts for the vast majority of visits (12,622) but the site has also been visited over a 100 times from Turkey, the United States, France, Germany, Cyprus, Lithuania and South Korea. The digital terrain is heavily surveilled and extensively mapped, meaning that the global reach, the number of viewers and the depth of their engagement is measured and represented pictorially.

By linking my website to Google Analytics I was able to ascertain that 7,992 unique visitors made a total of 18,050 visits to the website and viewed 116,886 pages.<sup>135</sup> Using this data I was able to ascertain engagement with the site. The majority of return visits, 7,528, were of 3-10 minutes duration; a smaller though significant number of visits, 1,063 were of a more extended engagement and lasted for over half an hour.

<sup>135</sup> <http://www.google.com/analytics/>

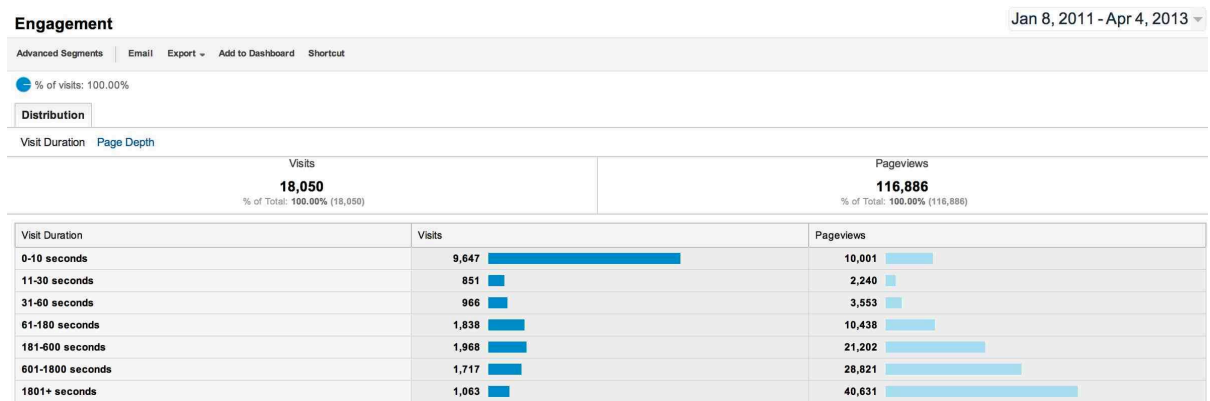


Figure 34. Google Analytics engagement January 2011-April 2013

In contrast engagement in the gallery with photo essays from my DVD *An Architecture of Forgetting*<sup>136</sup> was not surveilled or recorded in such detail, but both shows lasted for three weeks (the website has been online sixteen months) and did not attract visitors in such number. The coordinators of the performances estimated numbers attending to approximately 70 audience members for the performance at Cross Genre Poetry Festival, 50 for the performance at Side Streets, 800 for the Tate installation, and 180 for the ARTos performance. The ability to map and measure work in the digital realm produces a regulatory regime of its own and obscures rather than revealing the phenomenological aspects of interaction with the work. Statistics cannot capture, though they can compare, the commitment and (variably inconvenient) situated specificities of being an audience member at a performance, a passer-by at an installation, viewing the DVD with headphones in a gallery, reading the book,<sup>137</sup> leafing through a photograph album and of browsing the website.

<sup>136</sup> *PM NOW* (Group Show) PM Gallery, London, 2008 and *Borders and Identities* (Group Show) Stephen Lawrence Gallery, London, 2008.

<sup>137</sup> The book *The Archive of Lost Objects* has not yet been published or distributed.

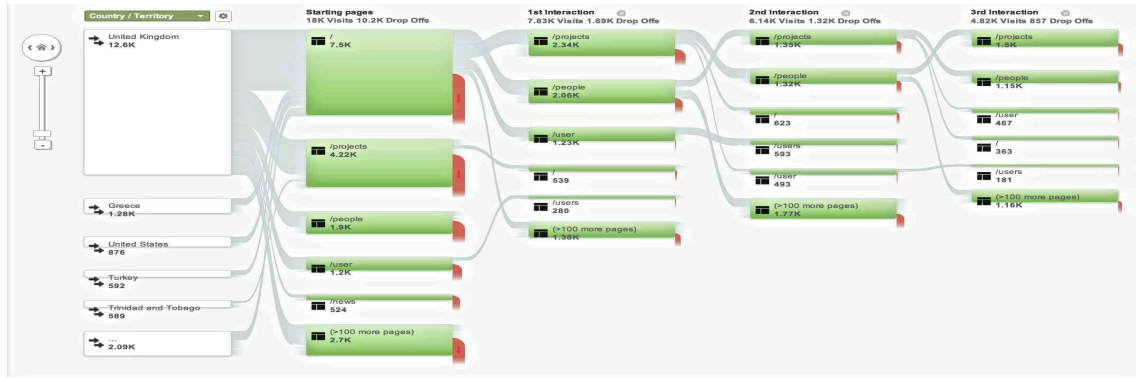


Figure 35. Google Analytics flow of visitors on the site January 2011-April 2013

The digital data measures and values connectivity both within the site (the flow of visitors) and across national territories (global reach), but cannot measure or evaluate the experience or creative and cultural value of the experience. Nevertheless Google's analytics does reveal the extent of global reach of my website in terms of both visitors and members.

Country / Territory	Visits	↓	Pages / Visit	Avg. Visit Duration	% New Visits
1. United Kingdom	12,622		7.37	00:07:03	40.41%
2. Greece	1,282		7.34	00:07:01	26.60%
3. United States	876		1.79	00:00:57	90.07%
4. Turkey	592		2.28	00:01:26	34.63%
5. Trinidad and Tobago	590		6.68	00:06:34	37.29%
6. France	212		4.14	00:03:45	37.26%
7. Cyprus	174		3.59	00:02:39	64.94%
8. Lithuania	157		5.44	00:07:14	29.30%
9. (not set)	140		5.62	00:04:27	62.86%
10. South Korea	131		4.98	00:04:30	55.73%
11. Germany	113		2.66	00:01:37	76.99%
12. Netherlands	95		2.24	00:01:15	44.21%
13. Canada	78		2.95	00:01:55	82.05%
14. Spain	77		5.26	00:03:41	63.64%
15. Brazil	73		1.90	00:00:37	30.14%
16. Serbia	65		2.88	00:02:32	67.69%
17. Australia	56		2.16	00:02:14	94.64%
18. India	55		2.45	00:01:56	89.09%
19. Italy	41		2.29	00:01:50	73.17%
20. Ireland	40		6.95	00:03:43	50.00%
21. Russia	32		1.53	00:00:40	100.00%
22. Singapore	31		4.10	00:02:57	32.26%
23. Belgium	30		3.57	00:03:19	93.33%
24. Malaysia	30		7.13	00:07:48	23.33%
25. Finland	26		4.12	00:03:45	46.15%

Figure 36. Google Analytics flow of visitors from national territories January 2011-April 2013



In conclusion, the global diversity of the members of the site brings my work into a collaborative space where diverse memories co-exist, creating the encounters between different histories and modes of reminiscence, and interact in new and unforeseen ways. The architecture of the website and of digital reverie provides a strong contrast to the family photograph album and its modes of consumption. The family album is a private document constructed for a fictive public gaze, which documents the progress of the family with teleological and narrative zeal. The website both archives and translocates my work within an allusive architecture that transforms the viewing experience.

## Conclusion



‘What is thus overlooked is the fact that every authentic poetic project is directed toward knowledge, just as every authentic act of philosophy is always directed toward joy.’

Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*.

This thesis describes and contextualises how my work investigates the relationship between modes of self-narration, the performance of the self and memory. Approaching memory as a landscape of fragmented individual and collective memories that is animated through performance enables the interrogation of narratives of memory rather than their reification. The body of work, the book, the film poems, the performances, the website and this thesis taken as a whole constitutes my becoming-autobiography, an assemblage incorporating, recreating and framing the diverse cultural practices and texts that have shaped and furnished my memories. The work is divided into constituent parts that enact me to explore how mediation influences the creation, performance, aesthetics and experience of memory practice.

This is in an attempt to create a work of memory that captures the conflictual clamour that is subjectivity without suturing contradiction out of the picture and thus creating a unified narrative or a ‘story’ of the self. Instead I interrogate the border territory of subjectivity through digression, multiplication, layering and dispersal, and through (Deleuzian) repetitions that reveal or lead to difference. The repeated interrogation of memories of early childhood, an inherited archive of objects and of the geographic territory of childhood, proceeds through the scholarly and poetic drift through the multidisciplinary and multidimensional bibliography that informed and grew out of my walking practice, as well as the walking practice itself.

My Nicosian drifts investigate the Dead Zone as autobiographical territory, as a contested terrain of political, poetic and collective memory practices. This leads me to consider other borders and contestations in relation to my practice at the borders between memoir and fiction and a varied field of interstitial autobiographical practices that take writing beyond the page, which I call expanded life writing.

Whilst I have evaded narrativising strategies throughout my practice, this thesis has told a story of a creative journey, of a series of relays between drifting and making, introversion and performance, theory and practice. I begin by walking a border terrain, the Dead Zone, locating it as the territory of my childhood, this border then translocates from the Dead Zone to the global literary borders between genres of autobiographical writing and transnational identities. Taking the word off the page, I then find myself at the border between text, image, performance and object in a field of art practice I identify as expanded life writing. I circle the Dead Zone repeatedly as the territory of my childhood, as a literary territory, as a field of art practice, as the contested terrain of different collective memory practices and performances and then as a personal archive.

My field of practice is not a field defined by one particular art form or aesthetic movement, although many of the examples of practitioners who define the field of writing relevant to my work have been (sometimes and somewhat problematically) defined as ‘postcolonial’. The field of practice is constituted by practitioners in a range of media whose work that embodies the poetics of moving between and beyond centres and peripheries, as an attempt at ‘an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself’ (Guattari, 1995, p. 131).

I have traced the paths of some of these multiple, mobile and fugitive impressions by making maps, collaging, writing, filming and taking photographs. Memory often emerged in a fugue state on the borders between reverie and analysis. My Nicosian *dérives* in the border zone produced modes of autobiography and autobiographical performance, which move beyond the ground of Cypriot politics and inhabit border territories of artistic and academic fields and of literary canons both locally and in global contexts. The knowledge that arises out of the totality of my practice attempts to capture the multiplicity (though not the totality) and interrelationships of the discourses and practices that inform my border subjectivity.

Transposing the Situationist *dérive* from the heart of Europe to its uncertain peripheries enabled both imaginatively traversing mythic, militarised, politicised, commercialised and imaginary spaces of my own recollection and devising, and walking practice that enabled encounters with the quotidian, the marginal and overlooked elements of the border zone. The autobiographical drift produces new spaces. Memory is multiplied both through its doubled nature, poetic practice and the drift itself. Memory, and thus subjectivity, is given more mutable forms and

meanings through the profusion of all its mediated configurations. The *dérive* produces an archive that moves between digital data and objects, maps and myths. Walking is an enunciation in the conversation that is the city. Walking as practice both traces and speaks back to the border.

My book *The Archive of Lost Objects* maps the space of interstitial subjectivities through the various voices, modes of address and styles of writing it deploys, ranging from the poetic and the autobiographical to literary criticism and philosophy. I have contextualised my writing in relation to the work of Mahjoub, Hussein, Ozdamar and Pamuk as writers within the canons of postcolonial, global and world literature. Their writing strategies are diverse but their common theme is of exploring identities at the cusp of the imagined and imaginary borders and of doing so from the peripheries. Tracing a genealogy from Cahun, Saloman and Hatoum, drawing inspiration from Anderson and Carson and gaining insights from Emin I have then mapped a field of expanded life writing in which to locate my autobiographical relay between page, screen, gallery space and stage, and performance in gallery, academic and theatrical contexts. These artists do not map the limits of a field of practice so much as indicate a choreography of moves between fields, media and discursive practices which seeks to unfix existing borders, both metaphorical, epistemological and literal.

Memory is haunted by remembered selves and often set in motion by bereavement and loss. Freud's ghost haunts this project as a benevolent, Guattarian schizoanalytic ghost, who provides me with the starting point for my memory drifts in the border zone by locating the self fictionalization, multiplication, and mobile, transitive modes of communication deployed by expanded writing in the memory process itself. His description of the way in which memory operates provides the framework for understanding how self-narration and performance are an indissoluble

part of memory, the enunciation and enactment of reminiscence transforms the memory itself.

My autobiographical border drifts are a situated practice within the heavily territorialised terrain of Cypriot poetics, which has historically pulled Greek and Turkish literary centres apart and off the island, towards Athens and Istanbul respectively. There is now a small and very diverse group of writers becoming-Cypriot in English who function, if they function at all as a collective, as a minor literature within world minor literatures. English is damned by its colonial connotation but nevertheless serves as a lingua franca for collaborative border poetics. Despite its liminal and peripheral status becoming-Cypriot through an English poetics nevertheless offers syncretic and liberating possibilities. The translocated canons proposed by poets Yashin and Stephanides suggest counter-memories to nationalistic poetics. Political discourse is marked not by its content but by its insistently readerly form, the explicitness of the signs and meanings of Cypriot identities. Poetic discourse, where it refuses straightforwardly political transparency and translatability offers a counter-memory to the contested and contradictory state sponsored collective memory practices and performances extant in the Republic of Cyprus and the unrecognized TRNC.

Anthropologists Loizos, Papadakis and Bryant identify a range of the discursive practices of collective memory that divide Cypriots in everyday life. Tactical forgetting, the forgetting (and thus refusal) of the contested narratives of the Other, is consistently at the heart of that division. In order to explore and problematise these divisory memories my practice engages with a reflexive ethnographic turn that speaks back to anthropological gaze by producing a ‘mutant production of enunciation’ (Guattari, 1995, p.131). The enunciations produced by expanded life writing are

mutant in that they slide between media, genres and cultural fields, transgressing critical borders and produce texts that are often difficult to appraise in conventional terms. For instance, the written texts of Cahun's *Disavowals* and Emin's *Strangeland* could be seen as unsuccessful autobiographies, the former because it withholds a clarity and narrative progression and the latter because it does not meet conventional standards of publishable and literate writing. Working on the borderlines of different cultural practices their success lies in their ability to problematise the unified self, and even where they insist on an 'authentic' self and story as Emin does, to undermine that certainty through fugitive moves across text, sound and image.

Eclecticism is also central in expanded life writing, where the reader/viewer must negotiate and produce meaning in a landscape of potential meanings that do not necessarily arise out of conventional linguistic decoding and literary expertise but rely on several different kinds of literacy and modes of cultural engagement. The multiplicity of textual meaning produced by expanded life writing arises out of the combination and juxtaposition, layering, palimpsesting of different media and different cultural spheres. Moving across the differing forms which my 'autobiography' takes involves following paths of association and the accumulation of information in a non-chronological and non-hierarchical manner leaving the 'meaning' of my life in the hands of audience. The 'autobiography' that arises out of collection of texts presented is neither infinitely open, nor is it imbued with a single true, authentic or predictable narrative. The dynamics of the form are non-linear and relatively chaotic. The reader/viewer is given the power to be the active maker of meaning but is directed across contexts, which will challenge as well as match their cultural competences and comfort zones. They are both empowered and disorientated by the work.

Collaboration and the generating future collaborative encounters have been central to my practice through the creation of the performances and the website. The dialogic nature of making and performing the work has been enormously enriching, both personally and professionally because it has enabled me to both produce an original contribution to Cypriot poetics and to create cultural spaces where extensive audience discussion and interaction were a central part of the process.

The successful collaborative nature of the site and its global reach brings my work into a shared space where diverse memories co-exist, creating the encounters between different histories and modes of reminiscence, and promising interactions, both in creating and traversing digital space to create memory practice in new and unforeseen ways. The architecture of the website and of digital reverie provides a contrast to the family photograph album and its modes of consumption. The website both archives and translocates my work within an allusive architecture that transforms the viewing experience and moves the emphasis from story to theme, from a chronology to topics, from singularity to multiplicities and from my memories to another's. Most importantly the website extends the reach of the work beyond the domestic sphere where the family album lives and the gallery where art lives. The media deployed and the context of the performance of memory, through direct interaction with a digital archive or not, produce different and new practices and engagements with the memory archive. My autobiographical practice explores how this engagement can be deployed to interrogate and to disrupt the top down collective memory-narratives that perpetuate enmity and political deadlock in the Cypriot context through collaborative practice that acknowledges the diversity Cypriot identities and accommodates its new Others.



There is a great deal of potential to develop the work further through more collaborative and collective drifts, and through working with others in a creative context in workshop, gallery and digital settings. Whilst the political arena provides limited hope for optimism in terms of conflict resolution in Cyprus, there is much potential for transformation through the cultural arena, through artistic collaborations across borders, and through new digital creative interactions, especially as most young Cypriots do not have currently have extensive contact with their counterparts in the other community. Such collective drifts have the potential to provide creative space for collective reminiscence, influence the politics of the archive and represent and nurture the multidimensional richness and diversity of Cypriot collective memory.

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# The Archive of Lost Objects



GREEK TROOPS FIGHTING WITH THE ALLI

خانه  
کتاب  
قوی  
ایستاده

الشکر محمد هجتم ایستاده است بنده بکار زله جانه

بشق عالم کر که در طلع سیرانه ایجو  
زله جانه ایستاده بود تو لیم شرف خنتا زله



# The Archive of Lost Objects







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Here's my itinerary, are you following me?

For a year I took photographs  
of all the empty beds I slept in,  
the rented rooms in strange towns  
where in the mornings I'd drink  
hotel coffee and breakfast alone.  
The empty beds where I practised  
stopping waiting,  
here they are  
full of your absence,  
so full that its presence erases you.  
I miss you more  
than I could love you now.  
It's something between  
a habit and a vocation.

## The Pergamon Museum, Berlin

The museum will be closing soon  
leaving the gods and goddesses alone  
in darkened rooms  
where all promises have turned to stone.  
In the December mist  
a canary yellow tram stops at Alexanderplatz,  
a gipsy accordionist is playing in the street.  
Time has proved me wrong:  
all of it is happening in an eternal present.  
All of it is unalterably and infinitely gone.

## The Archivist's Confession

The time of memory  
is the time of narrative.  
The architecture of memory  
is not merely a metaphor  
but a methodology:  
the Dead Zone becomes a labyrinth.

I let you call me Ariadne,  
no lie nor harm in that.  
But I am more my love,  
much more.  
I am the maze.  
I am the Minotaur.

## An Inventory

(on the dreams of conspirators and the conspiracies of dreams)

Each night dreams slip  
from the open mouths of strangers sleeping  
to clip the lawns with nail scissors,  
and fill their strange heads with verdant velvet swords

velvet traps and gloves and swords.  
Hordes, (terrible but tidy) premonitions  
then creep back in  
through locked doors and leaking ears.

I have trailed them  
sneaking through creaking corridors and years,  
then collected them :  
labelled and arranged typologically.

But I won't tell them your Names,  
(oh but tell them to me  
and I can keep them with my own)  
Betrayals and Disappointments.

I want to wake up now  
to go home where I'll dream of motorways  
rivers of destiny traffic flow  
roaring at me like a juggernaut.

Juggle naught - a currency  
that marks the promises  
and intimacies exhaled by the sleeping  
mouths of strangers.

## Gallery exhibit : Beuys

An arrangement of inert forms in stone  
still, waiting, in an abandoned room,  
objects leached of their former magic  
by some forgotten apocalypse.  
No rhyme brings reason, no prophylactic  
offers solace to now old lips.  
Mouths stuffed with felt and fat in the gallery tomb  
The unnamed tell us the dead are all together, the living alone.



Owe

The ghosts won't starve.  
We won't perish.  
We owe ourselves to death.

## Memory of my Childhood Bedroom

The dream-time of the blue room  
where the first stories hatched  
securely sutures horror and reassurance  
into one homely silence  
a long treasured, forgotten,  
memory of the time of Terror.  
There is no safety to return to,  
if you remember carefully,  
truthfully.  
The bears waited, crouching  
beneath and between the paving stones.  
All the dolls had seeing eyes  
and bore mute witness  
as the nursery shadows leaked  
demons and fairies  
in a bramble of beautiful words.  
Whispers oozed from our first books,  
it was the time of the three blind mice,  
the time of the murderous farmer's wife.  
From the shelter of mother's lap  
young ears alive  
to the wince of steel on stone  
(scissors, paper, rock),  
discern the song of its sharpening,  
the imaginary carving knife.



## Myth

All this autobiographical archeology is not in order to discern the longevity of these borders, markers of difference but their myriad kaleidoscopes of translations between cultures, from the linguistic; an undeciphered original Cypriot alphabet which blends linear Aegean and near eastern cuneiform writing styles, an original language which still leaves its trace in the accents of all Cypriots, forgotten literacies of Greek written in Ottoman script, Turkish in the Cyrillic alphabet; through the everyday to the mythic, Aphrodite's darker precursors, Cybele and Astarte. The mythic dominates: the myth of what constitutes the 'Cyprus problem', the beginning of the narrative, the myths that constitute national and gender identity. Myths are profoundly political. The eternal return of a 'Solution' must surely reside in that which has been forgotten, sutured. The ground of Cypriot identity is in myth.

A Broken God (in Borges' 'Paradiso')

A broken god walking through twilight writing,  
something infinite lost,  
an irrecoverable face beneath the Rose,  
in every obliterated mirror.

"Who knows whether tonight we shall not see it in the labyrinths of our  
dream and not even know it tomorrow?"

## A Life in Winter

I have built a life in winter  
insulated with cast off silences  
Crouched over the after words  
I have eaten their shadows in secret,  
sucked their sweetness  
and chewed on their bitterness  
like pomegranate seeds,  
jewel juiced and damned  
then drowned my dreams  
like new born kittens,  
and yet the thin ice of memory cracks  
under the seductive blizzard of falling  
into forgetting.  
To fall asleep in the snow,  
in the snow of a first,  
beginning.

## Then Christina's Ghost Speaks

Remember,  
remember you can no more hold me.  
No.  
Only pray you should forget the dark.  
You should forget.  
You should.  
There is no secret after all.  
I wear my mask to be pecked at  
by every wind that blows,  
captive in an alien house,  
hungry on exile's bitter bread;  
sacrifice like a glass eye,  
somewhat cold,  
mean and cold and slow.  
Our life is given us as a blank.  
Rage.

## A Broken Metaphor

A broken heart is a worn out metaphor  
a single shoe  
forgotten frozen  
by a rusty railway track,  
a boarded up station  
where trains no longer stop,  
the useless key  
to a lock that has been changed  
by houseful of blue eyed strangers,  
promises made in a lost language,  
inheritances in a defunct currency.  
The words only shroud the hurt in silence,  
like a thin film of polluted snow.  
“Never again” you promise,  
oh, again and again, you know.

## Mouth to Ear to Mouth

The story begins with the mouth: mouth to ear to mouth. And breath, the story begins with breath, breath inhaled, exhaled, a breeze on the skin. The story begins with the spoken word and the words are a kind of music. Until writing comes along there are no spaces between words that breathing does not fill, until the ancient Greeks perfect an alphabet with vowels even the written has no space between. The story begins with the telling and the technologies for this, the ruined palace that recreates through mnemonics, rely on structure, are a virtual architecture. The patterns and structure functions of the folktale for example, provide a map for the story. But don't mistake the map for the journey itself. The map provides directions not depth: the function of the character, not their qualities or individuality. That is left to the teller, the mouth, the breath, and to the listener, the ear, the imagination. The music of the story, its (Deleuzean) repetitions and refrains, its set prologues (once upon a time in English, bir varmis, bir yokmus in Turkish – once there was, once there wasn't) operate in a different impossible anti-intuitive order of time. This is the time of Schrödinger's cat. Whereas everyday life is rational, Newtonian, story time is in the quantum realm.



## All Your Little Girls

The birds have fallen silent.  
The wolves are lying low,  
hiding from the packs of their red cloaked assassins.  
No ripples on the lake,  
the mirror calm reflects the clouded sky.  
All the frogs have died,  
succumbed to a virus carried in princess kisses.  
This is the season of their revenge,  
those sharp toothed apple cheeked killers,  
the inevitable return of unowned rage,  
the unspoken threat,  
of all your little angels.  
They'll bite the hand that feeds them,  
feral at heart  
despite grazing on the sweet  
poisons you raise them on.



## The Bohem All-night Internet Café in Istanbul

The light-ravaged city  
presses its darkness  
against the windows.  
The small hours cradle solitude,  
the telephone finally consoled  
into silence.  
The screen flickers light  
and summons responses  
from an oceanic intelligence:  
libraries as magnificent as ancient Alexandria's,  
dystopias, idealists and artists,  
brothels full of children, love-sick cannibals.  
They are all here  
cached like secrets,  
but visible to every Googling flaneur:  
your lost lovers, dead civilisations,  
the legions of the damned and lonely,  
all a distant roar,  
a clamouring tide  
a new uncharted sea.



## Hotel Amnesia

For over a year I took photographs of all the empty beds I slept in, alone. Sliding the electronic key card into its slot, I felt lucky because life afforded me this certainty; I would always find a safe space, anonymous, hygienic, cleared of the traces of previous occupants, of the inevitability of history. Hotels indulge the fantasy that consequence can be cleaned away by the chambermaid. Tomorrow will wipe the slate clean: two glasses by the bathroom sink, miniature bottles of shampoo and bubble bath, a mini bar and price list, the room service menu, dial 9 for an outside line. Every hotel in every city, whatever the view from the window or the décor: from the efficient ugliness of the 70s brutalist Holiday Inn in Nijmegen, to the decaying grandeur of Sarah Bernhardt's room in the Pera Palace in Istanbul, every hotel had the ambience of Hotel Amnesia. I love to watch TV in languages I don't understand. I have learnt to bide my time. Waiting is my newly acquired skill, a talent I value highly - quite an achievement when time is in short supply, is not on my side. I sat in cafes, in Vilnius, Prague, Porto, Seville, writing out fugitive itineraries, although I was never quite certain if I was evading my ghosts or tailing them. The urge to remember and the compulsion to forget are locked in complicity. They are all part of the same haunted clan: the detective, the analyst, the archivist, the academic, the assassin - all searching for clues, tampering with the evidence, hoping for a conclusion that does not come.

## World News

The man from Tokyo  
explained the economy.  
“It’s like spring comes  
and you realise  
everyone else will survive  
and you cannot.  
Then,  
you commit suicide”.

## Dead Voices on the Radio

"I read most of the night  
and go south in winter",  
chasing the broken gods of the wasteland,  
dead voices  
across the airwaves.  
"I had not thought death had undone so many."

Ostrovni Street, Prague

I swam from the time of the island to the city  
nestled against the sleek insistence of the tide.  
I leant against the current  
in a silence that sleeved the self,  
a protean proficiency.  
An imaginary gramophone is playing  
in the tall empty room on Ostrovni Street,  
Callas' cough in La Traviata  
silts up the estuaries of memory.  
The needle catches in its groove,  
the lonely dead woman  
is stuck on a sigh before her aria.  
I walk to the castle in the last of snow.  
I dream of open heart surgery,  
the ventricles a map  
and the surgeons poised to reroute desire.

## What Does the Little Girl Want?

The little girl wants  
to be the perfect (dead)  
lady in the (secret) photograph.  
The One they keep hidden,  
locked away.  
The imaginary woman who is loved best of all.  
Innocence is terrible  
it knows no limit or remorse  
savage and shameless  
it leaps from the place of dark forests,  
the time of tigers, carnivorous, pitiless.  
That's what the little girl's desire is made of.

## Aphrodite

Aphrodite operated under different names before she became a Hellene, the blonde Botticelli beauty who decorates boxes of Cyprus Delight. She is a polymorphously perverse goddess, the Great Mother, incestuous, a goddess of war, mother to Phobos, terror, and Deimos, fear, as well as Eros. She is mother to the priapic, hermaphroditic, her priests are self-castrators. The screen memory of the blonde, depilated vision of Aphrodite as a European lovely seeks to erase a space of beginning and becoming of the wild Astarte. The mythic does not provide a secure static originary narrative for Hellenism, mythic as well as tectonic plates shift here, this is an earthquake zone. When we trace the genealogy of our myths they lead us to multiplicity; the Cyprus of the Ten Kingdoms lasted for a thousand years, they lead us to difference. Difference constitutes continuity, repetition is the ground of difference.



## The Fire Collector

I collect torn pages, faded tunes,  
leaking bottles, the echoes of lost scents.  
I agglutinate these accumulated archives  
with spit and spunk and tears  
and call them poems.  
I tell myself that's the one  
that got away.  
I collect slips of the tongue,  
suppressed gestures, incipient dance steps  
bitter recriminations and the stolen sweetness  
of beloved liars  
to make myself an autobiography,  
the who I will turn out to have been.  
There are boxes of evidence:  
letters, ticket stubs, flyers, photographs.  
Which imaginary jury will sift and weigh the evidence,  
the relevance of the invisible trace of lost kisses,  
the redundant keys to demolished buildings,  
the dead names in an old address book?  
Who'll collect my ghosts, who'll take them home  
and feed them at the same table as their own?  
I'll start a new collection  
of conflagration, sparks, fire,  
I'll let that blaze bless me  
with its emptiness.  
If you say my name  
with my own name  
you unname me.

## Stopped Clock

All the clocks have stopped, the heat is a stifling blanket muffling thought, everything abandoned to the cicadas' eternal lullaby. The dark green shutters are drawn for siesta hour in my childhood home in Nicosia. I imagine the apartment is still uninhabited; it's been decades now since we left. Imagine the walls still pockmarked with bullets holes, the hallway a desert, tumbleweed blowing down the canyon of the corridor, the palm tree still whispering at my window, an abandoned Barbie still waiting to play dress up in my bedroom.



## Home Movie

The truth of the image resides in its frailty,  
the captured gesture scratched and burnt,  
inscribed on film,  
the golden circles at the end  
of the reel.

The top of the screen filled by a widening wave  
of analogue interference on video,  
pixelating in digital translation.

The electric ghosts lose none of their energy  
but become more and more transparent,  
facing annihilation and non-representation,  
destined for abstraction.

The memories of machines are as capricious  
as our own.

## Nicosia Girl

It's performance time Nicosia girl,  
the traces and erasures of your footprints,  
the vestige of your gestures,  
your ghost on the balcony,  
are dancing for me.

Memory, a secret agent of war,  
sets the scene:

a bridge, a labyrinth, a graveyard.

Dance your inherited amnesia,  
a heritage in an undeciphered script,  
your political dread, your amour projection,  
your sentimental terrorism,  
double-shadow, violent architect,  
my assassin.

## The Letter

Character as a quality rather than a function comes to the fore in the novel and the novel's origins are epistolary. Think for instance of Samuel Richardson's novel *Clarissa*, published in 1748. The letters not only provide a structure, a strategy for telling the story, they also provide the means by which tragedy ensues. Lovelace sets a deadly trap for Clarissa through his letters to her. The letter, the confession, the diary, observations and reveries addressed to a particular recipient: they all initiate an intensity without any proximity. Indeed the letter requires the absence of the addressee; virtual intimacy requires a moment where there is the impossibility of physical intimacy. No eye to eye, mouth to ear to mouth. At the point of high classicism the novel moves to the third person. The authorial voice is also an omniscient eye. At this moment the novel invents cinema, the Kino eye is imagined, the panoramas of the mythic, of Odysseus sailing the wine dark sea, meet the intense cropped close up of Raskolnikov's tortured face in *Crime and Punishment*. But the camera depends on Newtonian technologies, the rationality of everyday science; the novel still carries with it some of the magical qualities of the story. We move through multiple subjectivities, are many people, seen from within and without. The film celebrates the surface, the novel the permeability of surface, penetrates the privacy of thought. This quantum physics of the story, unmoored from the physical proximity of performance and speech; from the particularity of the epistolary addresser-addressee relation speaks to a new audience, to an imagined community.

## Don't Read This Letter

Not this letter,  
read the other letter:  
the one I didn't write,  
the one I didn't send,  
the one delivered to the wrong address.  
It's impossible to articulate this desire  
with all the disappointments  
we've brought to it.  
Read my other letter:  
the story of absence,  
the epic verse of waiting.

## The History of Science: the Enlightenment

This was the time of the great uncovering  
when even the rocks relinquished  
their silent secrets  
to those who could read them  
and unlock the roar of time.  
Nothing would be solid again,  
after this.



## Ghost Dance

Jacques, ever handsome,  
said to the dead girl  
(whom Mark had elected my double)  
that there is a science of ghosts  
where psychoanalysis meets cinema:  
the ghosts in the telephone,  
gleaming on screens  
are multiplied not exorcised  
by technology.  
They are ghosts themselves  
and make it too easy  
to forget that we are not yet dead.  
He asks her if she believes in ghosts.  
“Now I do” she says.

## Sky Burial on Malabar Hill

An innocent murder of crows  
wheel over the Well of Silence.  
Late afternoon settles gently on Malabar Hill,  
a temperate touch of winter warmth,  
the sense- memory of your lips on my cheek.  
That last time we kissed.  
I asked "Will you always remember?"  
"Let the dead bury their dead"  
was all you said.



Cafe de Chinesa, Lisbon

In Lisbon on the Rue Aurelia,  
that leads like a ruled line to the sea,  
I stop for espresso and Portuguese pastries,  
flaking, filled with almond custard  
in the Cafe de Chinesa.  
I misread the sign as Cafe de Chimera,  
standing at the counter,  
drinking espresso strong as poison  
as pigeons peck crumbs off the floor.  
Here it feels like the end of the world,  
the end of an era,  
when it's only the end of the afternoon  
in a city sliding straight down to the sea.  
The silence is a spell like Sartre's 3pm,  
both too early and far too late.  
Only the pigeons are not enchanted,  
they coo and rise  
fluttering above our heads  
crashing into the window.  
I always expect too much, ask for too little,  
but in the Cafe de Chinesa on Rue Aurelia  
they know how to eke out pleasure and sadness  
with little cakes and coffee  
in the company of pigeons and silent co-conspirators.

## Galata Bridge

They loiter here, the itinerant card-sharps, pickpockets and glue-sniffers,  
the hawkers of cigarettes, condoms, umbrellas, roasted chestnuts and  
lottery tickets.

The young in one another's arms,  
like the headscarfed girl canoodling  
with her pierced and tattooed boyfriend,  
as Yeats observed, this is no country for old men.

A seventy-seven year old porter complains  
he has been swindled by a femme fatale  
pushing sixty.

Many are lonely divorces living in shabby boarding houses.

Poverty is a constant in their lives.

"I smoke a lot that always helps to still the hunger." says Ali, an insole  
vendor.

They are outsiders bound by regional loyalties,  
the cigarette boys are Kurdish,  
and divided by political allegiances.

Some are nationalists  
while the umbrella salesmen "form a fledgling socialist enclave".

Dignity is a not luxury here,  
honour has value as a social currency.

Pride fuels their anger.

The bridge is a city but  
the bridge is not the city  
and the city is not the country.

The bridge is, above all,  
itself.

## A Hierarchy of Naming

A hierarchy of naming is at work which produces identities that are more or less mutable, more or less of our choosing. Rather than waxing lyrical about the instability of subjectivity we need to examine the stubborn stability of some interpellations. The constant reiteration of the impossibility of pinning down identity or of encompassing the whole truth of one's subjectivity seem moot points when queuing up to go through passport control. Some identities are all too stable. I might puzzle over my national identity - whether it's matrilineal and therefore I'm English, patrilineal making me Turkish Cypriot, and whether the political violence of that sad island has made naming impossible to fix. Am I a postcolonial subject, a multicultural Londoner? What does it mean to try to inhabit hybridity as an identity? All useful reveries on the nature of national identity but the interpellation that really counts, that means I can travel with ease, that I won't have to queue for hours, risk being interrogated, strip searched and abused at airports is that I have an EU passport in my pocket, rather than a useless , internationally unrecognised TRNC passport.



Deux Magots, Paris In January

There are no wise men here  
right now  
the chandeliers reflect  
in the glass:  
shoals of light  
let loose in the grey sky.  
Umbrellas pass,  
memories of crows.  
We observe  
that we are observed  
and thus the afternoon passes.







## A Community of Imagined Crowds

Canons create boundaries it's true, but we mustn't forget that reading is also an act of subversion, one that can, through the promiscuous and polymorphously perverse mating of texts in the reader's mind, destroy boundaries. I read Seferis, Elytis, Cavafy, Lawrence Durrell, make them my own. They wander through crowded corridors brushing shoulders with Nazim Hikmet and Jean Rhys, Borges, Eliot and Emily D, Atilla İlhan; whoever I'm reading right now. I take liberties. I lay claim to the same mythology that Hellenism uses as its cultural self-justification, which Freud uses to universalise phallocracy. I'm not trying to get Medusa to crack a smile like Cixous, or make Medea loveable like Christa Wolff. It's just where I live, who I hang out with. And place those references in the context of contemporary culture, for instance in cinema: Yeshilcam and Hollywood, Turkan Soray, Sirkeci lush numbness.

## The City Dissolves

There is a constant contrast between the shadowy chiaroscuro of ferries, railway stations, tram stops, dilapidated ghetto bars and lokantas in the labyrinthine backstreets of Galata and Pera, the grimy glamour and decaying grandeur of Istanbul's European quarter and the protean brilliance of the sea, roiling with wriggling squid and octopus, smelling of fish and tar. The city, so often characterised as a bridge between the East and West dissolves, becomes cloud, rain, fog, a stream of consciousness.

Stabbed in a Heart that was Broken

Stabbed in a heart that was broken;  
shot in a head full  
of explosion:  
the synthesis of a manifold of representations  
under the concept of an object.  
The freedom to lose is mine.  
The game is not over yet.  
There is a war on love.  
No one will win.





## The Screen's Memory

After every one had been annihilated:  
no one left alive,  
but every one remained.  
The screens still replayed their lies,  
fantasies, documentaries.  
The CCTVs, televisions, cinemas, computer screens  
repeated all our screen memories.  
Programmed by The Last Projectionist  
collated by The Last Archivist  
the teeming populace of ghosts  
our shadows and ethereal reflections  
made ready then took our place.

## My Favourite Dream

Long after your death I'd wander aimlessly, ride buses to their unfamiliar suburban conclusions, abandoning myself to numbers magic. After several centuries of random searches I knew that I'd find you, that finally the living might speak with and not for the dead. Reparations would be made. The mourning could, would, end. The celestial Route Master to armistice would stop for me and everyone I'd ever loved and lost would be there, sailing to oblivion on the upper deck. Sometimes this idea flooded me with a blissful sense of peace, at others it terrified me so completely I'd walk in the rain for miles or hide in the library until the darkness fell. I'd wake up suddenly with the sense of being urgently expected elsewhere. That immobilising panic, a nervous lassitude, you know that feeling that you're too late for a crucial meeting, a vital, forgotten, rendezvous; too late for redemption.

When the dream goes well I finally find you again, we meet in the ruins of a cinema, a grand old Gaumont, a 1920s kitsch medieval folly. Snow filters through the collapsed ceiling, motes melting and dancing in the light of the projector. The red velvet curtains are ripped and charred, rich ragged shrouds from a glamorous past. Everything is as devastated and beautiful, as irretrievably strange and lost as Salamis, or Pergamon. Gorgeous filaments of light, sparkling stars and flakes of snow occlude my vision, and although our private civilisation is long gone the screen is still intact, the projector still whirrs into action. We sit side by side and we speak in the silver nitrate glow.

When I wake up I try desperately to hear your voice again. How I long to hear your voice again. I try to remember what we say to each other but it's gone. All I can remember is the snow and the whirr of the projector. We're talking so intently that the first time I had the dream I paid no attention to the screen at all but in subsequent iterations I try to watch, to remember what the film is, because I know there's no possibility of recalling your words, your voice. But you become upset, you want me to look into your beautiful dark eyes, to listen to you. There's nothing I want more myself and so I abandon myself to your gaze and your scent. I miss your scent. The way I miss your scent breaks my mammal heart.





NYC 2003

Everyone is lonely now  
which is strange  
given the shortage of space  
and the availability  
of dancing shoes  
at discount prices.  
At night the ambulances mourn,  
a wailing classical chorus,  
countless tragedies  
incidentally weaving  
through my thin dreams.  
I did not leave  
any forwarding information,  
no number or address,  
and still you won't call  
or reply to my unsent letters,  
for the best I guess  
as there is no fireplace,  
no flames to consume your words  
in my tiny room.

## Dark Eyes/ Aphasia in Kairos

Elegant and innocent,  
he had been brought up well,  
always polite, even when he was cruel.  
I miss the me he loved,  
perhaps even more than he does.  
She thinks he glimpses her  
on Istiklal sometimes.  
I know she's dead.

Café Slavia, Prague : Still Hoped For

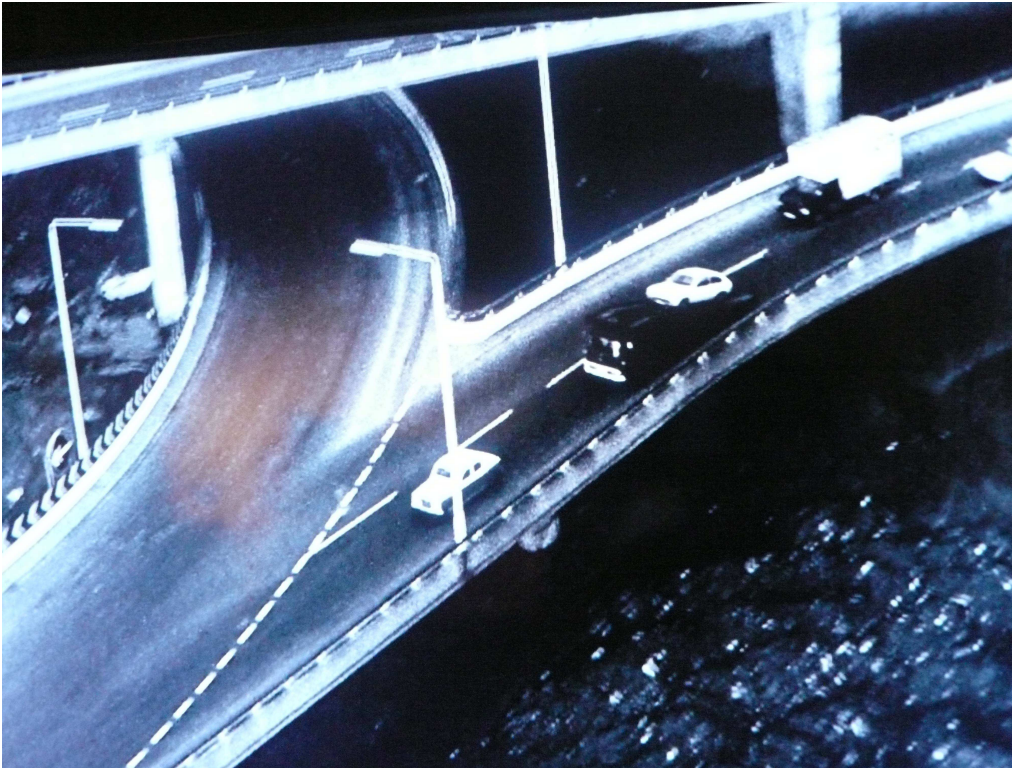
The storm bestows diamonds on the window pane.  
The sun comes out so suddenly  
a mood overwhelms you  
like a song you can't remember the words to  
and the melody too  
eludes you.  
But you walk  
through the crowd, almost dancing,  
in time to its absence.  
And the rainy streets gleam  
with something not entirely forgotten,  
still hoped for.

## Thinking on Foot

Thinking on foot through cities involves the company of ghosts, immersing yourself in one space calls to mind another. Benjamin detects both the ghost of the Russian village and the contrasting ghost of Berlin on he wonders/wanders through Moscow. Circling back and forth around and through Abdicavus Street followed by curious little street children I am in turn reminded on Benjamin's walk through Naples. I wander the streets of Havana, seeing Lefkosa, cities where embargoed time both slows down and speeds up, all is in ruins as if centuries have passed, reminders of the past lie that little changed. Time dilates around the Dead Zone, in Lefkosa generally, within the city walls one cannot escape memories of the long decade of the enclave and the last thirty-six years as the phantom limb of the Republic. Halbwachs notes in his analysis of Jerusalem that memories "lend themselves to enumeration, a successive review, so that thought does not remain immobile and so that, even though thought revolves around the same circle, interest is renewed by some diversity of appearances and events". The traversability of the border makes it homely to one who grew up in the enclave, in a way that the 'prison walls' of the sealed border from 1974-2003 could never be.

## Complicit Cartographies

I lost the thread  
of a dream  
a mapmaker offered me.  
It rained and the ink ran  
on the pages of an A-Z for the city  
where I always found myself  
lost.  
And if I asked among the forest of strangers  
drifting in a breeze  
of my sleeping  
for the names of streets  
for directions  
I'd wake ...  
Evicted unceremoniously  
from that city  
I'd wake losing  
first the punctuation:  
the weave of tense,  
the warp of sense,  
until all that remained:  
the traffic roaring like the sea  
the harbour lights of my childhood  
on a summer's night,  
a small forgotten war and the smell of jasmine,  
other cities rising and falling  
other fish frying  
dogs barking  
couples arguing.  
Where is that hotel room?  
Is it the scene of a murder  
or the source of love?  
Why am I waiting at the airport?  
On waking I am lonely  
for a grammar  
to contain these questions  
to sew the story together,  
for a complicit cartographer,  
for dreaming in company.



## Zoebide in Nicosia

Like Zoebide in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, Nicosia is built according to the routes dreamers remember from their dream. Calvino's dreamers dream of chasing the elusive fugitive figure of a naked woman, Zoebide through an imaginary city. They meet and build a city. Each builds a tangled skein of streets according to their remembered route in their dream in order to trap their quarry. Subsequent waves of immigrants arrive. Men who have dreamed the same dream of Zoebide keep coming to the 'white city, well exposed to the moon'. "The first to arrive could not understand what drew these people to Zoebide, this ugly city, this trap".



## You Can't Get Lost in the Walled City

Daedalus' fugitive disinformation,  
a nomadic Ottoman passion,  
a palimpsest of amnesias,  
a river, a shopping street,  
a boundary, a barricade, a border.  
This walled city is a labyrinth of war  
under the rule of a secret dream.  
On waking in the morning  
of the pale blue apocalypse,  
in the spring time of the little brides,  
the blood poppies,  
long after the streets lost all their names,  
it's still impossible to get lost  
in the old city.



## What My Mother Bequeathed Me.

The needle on the little pick-up  
would click, whirr, retract  
and bring to an end the tune,  
to that interlude of the afternoon.

And after a moment's silence,  
her voice rich with patience  
my mother would sigh,  
a exhalation sharp  
with shards of broken promise  
that neither the music  
nor I could soothe or mend.

On evenings when my parents went out  
I'd surreptitiously try on her role,  
an interloper in her golden mules  
shaky and unsteady wrapped in her mink stole,  
reliving the musky Shalimar melancholy  
of those bedroom afternoons

I'd practise, practise  
until I had it pitch perfect  
the sticky black beautiful neediness,  
the perfumed fragility.

It is a secret scented discontent,  
my maternal inheritance,  
the homely foreign place  
of femininity.

## Something to Do with the Colour Yellow...

What to do with the filthy illusion  
that a life could be a story?  
What to do with the name,  
that replaces the body,  
the ink that replaces the breath,  
that demonic transubstantiation?  
The life woven from slim threads  
of opportunity, possibility,  
knotted with slubs of undigested memory,  
you wear it like a cloak of sky.  
Remember to unweave the cloth  
in the darkness of each night  
to begin again in morning  
like silence taking leave  
of obliterating speech.  
The story only exists  
when it is over,  
when the life is finished.  
And I will not have  
the story over yet,  
no shroud of narrative  
no robes like glory.  
I am naked  
weaving and unweaving  
waiting  
for desire  
to begin again.  
Something to do with the colour yellow...

## The Novel and its Duty

Just as Nietzsche declared the death of the One God, the novelists became the many gods. It is a commonplace observation that the classic realist novel empowers the author with omniscience. The novelist is god. But there are many novels, many gods. The third person point of view is monotheistic only in the singular instance, but literature brings multiplicity. And these gods can write from the margins, like George Eliot, the Bronte sisters. But the Ancients, the Olympians, were capricious and amoral deities. The 19<sup>th</sup> century novel grapples with morality. The novelist is a god with a duty. Their approaches and interpretations of this duty vary enormously – think of Thackeray, Balzac, Dickens, Dostoyevsky, Zola. Yet for all of them, whether realist, naturalist, or existentialist, character is a quality, and a complex and unique sensibility – their genius lies in their ability to evoke this. More crucially, Becky Sharp, Therese Raquin, and Rodion Raskolnikov: their character functions arise out of their complex character qualities.

One is One's

Role refers to a part one takes;

One plays a role; one is one's identity.

one's very being

Identity on the other hand implies that one's very being is involved.

One plays a role; one is one's identity

one's very being.

Role refers to a part one takes;

Identity on the other hand implies,

If an infant male has too intimate a relationship with his mother

(her body and her psyche)

and if she tries to maintain

that intimacy indefinitely in an ambiance of

traumaless pleasure

one's very being, too intimate a relationship,

one's very being, indefinitely in an ambiance ...

One plays a role; one is one's identity.

If her body and her psyche tries

to maintain that intimacy indefinitely in an ambiance

one's very being

very being

Role refers to a part one takes;

One plays a role; one is one's identity.

one's very being, traumaless pleasure....

Role refers to a part one takes; too intimate a relationship.

Identity on the other hand tries to maintain that intimacy

that one's very being is involved indefinitely in an ambiance

traumaless pleasure

one's very being

One plays.

A role one is one's: identity.

On the Bridge Across the Golden Horn (a poem from/for Emine Sevgi Ozdamar)

She was longing to be free to pursue  
the beauty of men,  
dressed in black like Anna Magnani  
and shopping for a Mao jacket like Brigitte Bardot's  
in order to impress her revolutionary film-maker lover,  
when Gina Lollobrigida's flower strewn car interrupted  
a left-wing demonstration in the driving Istanbul rain.  
Newspapers mark the passing of political icons,  
of Che, Martin Luther King, Franco;  
a crazed chorus : "LOOKING COSTS MORE",  
"THE REVOLT OF THE NEUROTICS",  
"BABY DIED TWICE".

The book vendors on the streets of Istanbul lay out their wares,  
the wind leafing through the pages.

"Poverty ran in the streets, and the people who in their lives had wanted  
to do something about it and had been killed as a result now lay down in  
the street as books. One only had to bend down to them, buy them, and  
hence many of those who had been killed entered homes, gathered on the  
bookshelves next to the pillows and lived in the houses."

Oktay Rifat

Speaking of death  
and things to wear,  
the poet was always  
immaculate in appearance,  
freshly pressed;  
not exactly afraid  
at the end.



Asmali Mescit, Istanbul

This is a life I didn't live  
here in this dark winding side street:  
Yakub, the scruffy intellectuals' restaurant,  
the fly blown grocer, the jockey club betting shop,  
the vegetable seller calling  
someone other than me  
down to his horse drawn cart  
with his raucous ritual cry.  
On the second floor  
the hairdresser I don't go to every week,  
round the corner from the café  
I don't spend dreamy afternoons in,  
across the way Babylon nightclub  
where I don't drink late occasionally.  
This is the space of my shadow life  
filled with the books  
I didn't write,  
friends I never knew.  
It waits without missing me at all  
like a stranger passed in the street  
who could have been a lover  
in a different climate,  
under the jurisdiction of other stars.  
our eyes met briefly, blankly,  
me and a life I didn't live  
waiting for me on Asmali Mescit street.  
And I wonder where she is,  
long to tail her  
the woman I would have been  
in this tiny teeming back street  
in the heart of a city I never called mine.

## Photograph

I'm looking at a 10 by 8 inch print of a black and white photograph, taken at the Jazz Cafe in Camden, London, twenty years ago, a young man and woman on stage. Lysandros Pitharas: he's to the right of the picture: tall, dark, handsome (just like the fortune tellers promise) in a roll neck sweater and crumpled hounds tooth check jacket, looking like Philip (or Christopher, if that's more to your taste) Marlowe after a long dark night of the soul spent cruising with Genet. He's saying something, speaking into a microphone, perhaps reading from the sheaf of papers in his left hand, his right hand outstretched. Alev Adil: she's to the left, her curly hair piled up on her head, a pinstriped jacket over a Westwood corset. I'm watching him carefully, one hand in my Levis pocket, a half smile half obscured by the microphone. I don't remember what she/ I was thinking in that moment. It was a press preview for the Camden Cypriot Arts Festival. There's a big banner behind us that says so and gives the dates 23 June to 19 July 1991. I've a terrible sense of time - last month seems decades away, memories from twenty years ago are still so fresh. The photograph freezes the moment, a distant extant present tense of ghosts. I haven't worn my hair like that in years. Lysandros died exactly six months after the photo was taken. I heard that the photographer, Andy, died years back. A friend, Haris, told me saw the obituary in Parikiaki, the London Greek newspaper. Time freezes, melts, spills through the shadows and light of the photograph. "Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe...It is because each photograph always contains this imperious sign of my future death that each one, however attached it seems to the excited world of the living, challenges each of us, one by one, outside of any generality" (Barthes, *Camera Lucida*).

## The Adventure of the Line

Bergson says “We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality, and, as these are characteristic of reality, we have only to string them on a becoming... Perception, intellection, language so proceed in general. Whether we would think becoming, or express it, or even perceive it, we hardly do anything else than set going a kind of cinematograph inside us”. Deleuze characterises the photograph as a ‘mould’ of time, which immobilises the instant that it privileges a given point of view, creates an (institutionalised) subject.

In his analysis of Bacon’s oeuvre Deleuze contrasts the possibilities of painting and photography. “We are besieged by photos which are illustrations, newspapers which are narratives, cinema-images, tele-images ...Here there is an experience which is very important for the painter: a whole category of things that one can term ‘clichés’ already occupy the canvas”. Deleuze is playing with language here, in French cliché signifies both the snapshot and stereotyped thought, both requiring minimal skill, time or effort, and freezing and limiting reality. Space is continuous and contiguous, exemplified by “any-point-whatever” as the indivisibility of movement itself.

Photography limits that perception, privileges certain views, of space and instants of time. Deleuze contrasts the photograph, a mould of space, with the cinematic shot, a mould of change. Whilst he sees the painting as providing the possibility of “the adventure of the line”, photography can only provide a tracing of the “state of things” rather than a becoming.



## Transient Theme

In the cosmic dark room  
the image develops,  
a wash, an oily film, a transient theme.  
I am a woman in the crowd  
a grainy dark fragment turning away  
against the flow  
of indistinguishable faces.  
I am a woman passing through,  
a cancelled passport,  
a lip print on a cup,  
a dip in a pillow.  
Packing away my chipped deities,  
I am a lost civilisation.  
A solipsist's mythology grows shabby in my rucksack,  
a beloved broken toy.  
I'm taking my gods with me,  
knowing there's always  
Nothing to bequeath to eternity.

Dance the Ruined Map

Dance the ruined map

Ariadne

a red thread of a dream

a secret archive of inherited amnesia

## Burgled House

Something lost but nothing broken;  
shadow, water, dust,  
A tangled skein  
that still manages to shuttle  
back and forth,  
the thoughts I can't let go of,  
the sentences I repeat  
without conclusion.  
The silence remains unbroken,  
fort-da  
here again,  
fearing then hoping for an end.  
The house is empty.  
Everything looks like evidence  
in this forlorn forensic light.  
Shh. The evening does not yield,  
no foot steps coming up the path.  
The invisible mender is not here  
to weave the torn gestures together  
unwind the wound.  
Perhaps I like this best,  
it feels familiar,  
this fort-da with loneliness  
in a burgled house.

## Memory and the Impossibility of Fidelity

On the last day of his life, in the afternoon Lysandros whispered his last poem about Apollo, the gleaming warrior now disguised as a thousand reeling birds, and slipped irretrievably from the spoken to the written word. His funeral was as theatrical, dignified and unconventional as he was: the gilt splendour of the Greek Orthodox Church in Camden, with all its traditional incense and ritual but also with, controversially, unbelievers, heathens, Turkish Cypriots reading elegies. I'm not sure who persuaded the Greek Orthodox priest to allow such a heresy. Mustafa made sure that Lysandros was buried in Highgate cemetery as he'd wished. The flowers were white. He'd written: "Anoint me with white flowers when I lose my blessed breath" although there was no "crown of white flowers, jasmine, held by a golden thread".

I can't quite capture the grain of his voice, the cadences of his speech, the swoop of a downward inflection at the end of each line but I can still hear the sound of the handful of earth each mourner flung on the coffin. Years later, when Mustafa opened the tidy little suitcase that held Lysandros' work, poems spilled out, yellow pages like doves, jaundiced with age, or bleached ravens. Silence flocked and filled the room; the air was heavy, as if rippled by invisible moths. His words are a challenge to that silence, if not a refutation of it, while I am putting words on a dead man's eyes. In whose shiny currency are my words minted? Where is the most unjust betrayal? Mourning erases the lost ones, translates them always and only as absence.



## The Majestic Café, Porto

The pigeons of Santa Caterina  
take off with a thunder of feathers, abruptly  
clouding the grey sky with their wings.  
The Douro claims a mood as etymology  
a river of taciturn darkness flowing to the stormy sea.  
The tile fronted houses totter precariously  
leaning against each other for support,  
as though beauty and decrepitude  
were inevitable dancing partners.  
Nothing is quite real,  
today everything feels like a half forgotten,  
unfinished story.  
They protect you from such sadness  
in the Majestic Café ,  
with their conjuring tricks of courtesy  
and starched white linen.  
The gilded and garlanded putti do not age  
although the mirrors have cataracted  
a silver fogginess with time,  
perhaps in order to flatter the ageing regulars:  
the septuagenarian diva embraced  
by the dead remains of a leopard  
and the memory of theatrical fame;  
the retired professor reading Mr Palomar;  
my shy bespectacled admirer,  
who lives with his mother  
and works in the camera shop across the street.  
The waiters in their white jackets bring me ,  
along with my warm frothy coffee,  
the unspoken reassurance that although  
I'll always be a stranger, everywhere,  
there is the promise of safe harbour  
here and there.

## A Small Forgotten War

Mine is a small, forgotten war, a modest war even, nothing on a grand scale, some squalid atrocities but no Srebrenicas, more of a sour extended sulk, a long-term corrosion of the soul. I was born into a time of war. I am as old as the Cyprus Problem. I am thousands of years old. The street I was born in has aged centuries in the decades since I left. The memory of the place and the place itself are just so much rubble. That narrow winding back street close to the border in the old walled city is now a trashed slum. The border, that abject septic scar, serves as a monument to War. On both sides of the city we look away, there is a move outwards, towards Kyrenia in the north and Limassol in the South, to dreary new build suburbs, barbeques in the yard, satellite TV. At the heart of the city there is this wound. Perhaps the Forbidden Zone is almost beautiful in the way it speaks to all of us of our failures, our culpability - unless we choose to forget our own responsibilities for this, our own bloody, tired legacies and see ourselves as only and always the victims of others. Mine is a small forgettable war but all wars give birth to ruins. Ruin eternalises and naturalises destruction, as though it has always been this way, and always will be.

And yet I am not repelled by the festering spaces of the Forbidden Zone. The rust, the stench of rubbish, and the bored conscript soldier boys all shimmer with perverse seduction in the August heat. I am drawn to the dead end streets that mark the border. I follow the fault line from both sides of the city, hungrily photographing the lines of barbed wire, the observation towers, the bricked up windows, the bullet-pocked walls. I film my walks until the border guards order me not to. Soldiers are familiar to me, especially the tall impassive Canadian UN soldiers I remember from the 70s. Crossing the Green Line was something I did every day as a child. I was born into memories of UN blue, of military convoys, checkpoints, rumours of impending war. When the checkpoint opened again I came back after years away. I kept crossing and re-crossing; the journey was cosy and nostalgic. I liked that walk, my footsteps invisibly scribbling along the scar of the Green Line, past the bus stuck in no man's land for thirty years, past the Ledra Palace Hotel, once the glamorous haunt of visiting ballerinas and spies. The swimming pool I swam in every day in the summer is sandbagged, the hotel now announces itself as a UN exchange point. I like crossing from one side to the other, and back. It doesn't disturb me. War has been home to me. And the sea. Like K says, you can never get tired of watching the sea.

The words "I don't forget" are emblazoned across Greek Cypriot children's school exercise books. The phrase "We will not forget" is used in official propaganda on the Turkish Cypriot side. Yet I can make no sense of what is to be remembered or how. All memories become controversial and contested. How to remember? Perhaps more crucially, I ask myself what did I choose forget? How are we to unstitch the sense we made of it, to wear the scars with equanimity?

## Kyrenia Harbour: Turkish Coffee

You want your cup read?  
Well what could those grains tell you,  
that you have not already  
hoped for and feared?  
The same cobbled steep streets  
coiling down to the embrace of the tiny harbour,  
that route you've retraced  
a thousand times  
with stumbling steps  
awake and in your dreams;  
your desultory gaze  
grazing familiar strangers' faces  
on sultry nights so still  
you weren't aware of the time slipping  
away with the waves that lap the shore.  
"I'm leaving soon" you lie.  
And with an insolent look  
their eyes reply  
"Yes, so am I".

## Rust

A dog barking insistently in the distance,  
the needle hissing through the scratched spiralling grooves  
of a warped 33.

Billie's long dead  
but she's singing again,  
a song I used to play as I wrote  
years ago.

My thoughts would stumble and dance to  
the clattering emphatic dissonance,  
the irregular rhythm of thought  
the clanky old Canon imposed.

Years later and my words  
are a quiet pattering on the key pads,  
the faltering circuitous scurry of a mouse.

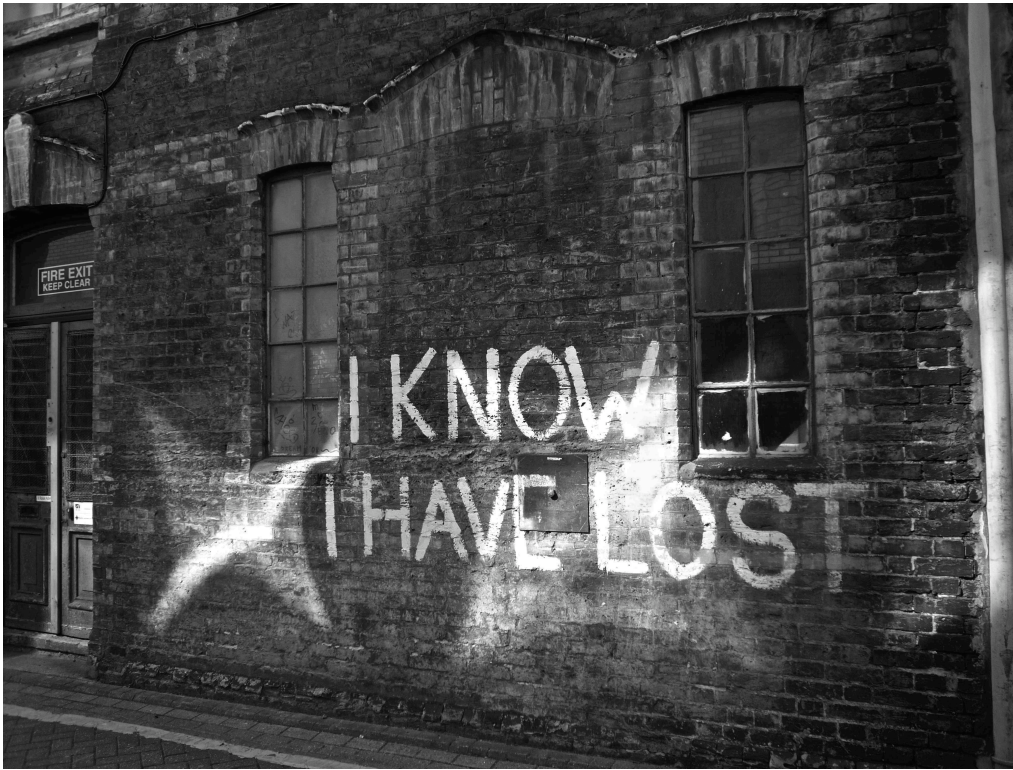
I am the same and I am different.

Twenty years ago is all gone  
and it's still here  
the absence sitting down to make itself comfortable  
the past becomes the present all over again.

A phone rings in the hallway,  
the echoes blowing  
like litter in the wind  
all the lost and unwritten letters  
like leaves scattered  
across the streets in drifts.

Not known at this address.

A machine answers the phone's plaintive call  
and then silence envelopes the city  
a silence so complete  
like exodus  
or snow:  
pure Sunday.



## The Murder of Gods

In the early years of the twentieth century the novel melted. It became a stream of consciousness. Mrs. Dalloway and Molly Bloom melted the map of structure, gave us character as quality without character as function. Plot was drowned in the flow of sentience. The novel began to deconstruct itself long before the philosophers set about the task. Just as Nietzsche had murdered God, so Barthes murdered the author as a god. Barthes, ever the Dionysian, gave the reader the chance to be his own god, to deconstruct and recreate multiple meanings instead of orthodox readings, to challenge the fundamentalism of the canon. Alas most readers were not ready to be gods at all. Most readers turned out to meek and mild, the slaves that Nietzsche had railed against. Since the novel no longer afforded them certainties they turned away from it. Modernism heralded the end of the novel as the primary media of bourgeois culture. The imagined community of the mainstream abandoned serious literature, preferred to find that (lost) certainty in the cinema, in the immersive red velvet womb of Hollywood.

## Vilnius

Snow muffled sounds are crisp  
snap like delicate wafers,  
each word suspended  
for a crystalline moment,  
each sentence a fleeting glimpse  
of a miniature chandelier  
then a cloud, then gone.  
We are lost in the winding medieval lanes  
of Vilnius, whose twisted paths and corners  
are as sharp and plentiful  
as Lithuanian consonants.  
For every three fair faces  
picture an absent, darker, fourth.  
“The first Vilnius telephone directory contained  
only two Lithuanians names”  
Rolandas tells us.  
“The rest were...  
Jews.”  
An imagined distance away  
all across the city  
phantom phones ring and ring.  
The sky is so still,  
still, no one’s answering.  
History is inescapable.  
It falls with the snow,  
freezes forests into fleeting dreams.  
Half-forgotten memories,  
pagan gods, the slaughtered citizens of Vilnius,  
are all buried under a sturdy shroud  
of ice,  
of prayer;  
prayers whispered by stooped old women,  
sieved through teeth  
as variegated as Baltic amber,  
their backs bent double  
by the weight of dreary Soviet decades,  
when hope was nourished only



with tinned fish and good, hard bread.  
The monk offers benediction  
in the monastery  
resplendent in his habit  
a strong soft linen  
woven from belief,  
while the drunken poets lounge  
in darkened ateliers  
knocking back the three nines  
like it was inspiration:  
the muse , 40% proof.  
Snow muffled silence is soft  
yet snaps like bone underfoot.  
The frozen forest keeps its secrets.  
The phantom phones keep ringing  
they wake you up in the still night,  
because still,  
no one is answering.

Nothing comes out of the Horror

After the Horror  
they ate their own  
shadows  
light as air  
but taste of mud.  
They had survived,  
(survival is the most important truth)  
they had survived with bellies full of stones  
and it gave some of them  
an appetite for war  
(the logic of survival  
as the most important truth).  
They had been cursed  
And now they were promised  
Land.  
They brought Nothing with them  
(the logic of survival  
as the most important truth)  
for Nothing comes out of the Horror.  
Nothing good:  
a memory of snow  
the horror of stone  
the testimony of blood  
the patrimony of bones.

## The Ruined Cinema, the Screen Memory

The ruined cinema is the key to everything; it is the set for the screen that memory is projected upon. The editing strategies of the unconscious provide many technologies of fictionalisation. Events are transferred to a place they didn't occur. Several people are merged into one or one is substituted for another. Separate experiences are combined. Every time we remember we use psychic technologies analogous to those used in fiction or filmmaking.

A psychic suture is inherent in the act of remembering. The screen memory serves to (incompletely or problematically) repress and omit the objectionable. Memory does not emerge it is formed, edited. We create an archive (fragments of memories) to generate screen memories/narratives; use visual, acoustic, linguistic and melodic metaphors as contiguities to elude closure and allude to indeterminate unarticulations; to explore the processes that determine what we exclude/ edit out and what we present as fact or choose to fictionalise. Both the memory and the representation of memory are crafted objects open to interpretation, both have the power to deconstruct and disturb historical and personal narratives as much as to confirm them. The screen is not only a cover but just as it is in the cinema it is a plane of projection. "You projected two fantasies onto one another and turned them into a childhood memory", Freud tells his double, his imaginary analysand. We are the projectors as well as the directors, editors and audience in the cinema of memory.

Perhaps Freud's concept of screen memory is compelling precisely because his interpretation of the screen memory refuses closure, the secure finality of a definitive interpretation, which he promises. The screen memory is not only a shroud over a hidden object (subject) it is a process of allusion, a stream of metaphors which provide a contiguity to the zone of the inarticulable. The inarticulable shifts: there is no single unsayable; we are cast into a zone of indeterminacy, an imaginary cinema where we are both projector and sole member of the audience.

We are always divided from the self we see in memory, and any detective work around the identity of that alter ego inevitably alters the ego. The analysis is never complete, the 'meaning' of the memory never fixed. There can be no Final Interpretation to uncover; it will have to be read against all the other analyses created by prior, and subsequent, selves. Whereas the promised pleasures of the detective genre in film and fiction (and of psychoanalysis) speak of a fantasy of order, that the criminal will be apprehended; that the Law of the Father will be

reinstitutioned; the mystery will be solved, Freud's detective work here speaks from a more culpable position. Rather than Deleuze and Guattari 's forbidding "priest of interpretation" who is at hand every time "desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence", in Screen Memories Freud presents us with the psychoanalyst as far more ambiguous, playful, figure. For while Freud as analyst/ detective 'solves' the murder (that which has been exiled from articulation), he is also his own analysand/ criminal covering his tracks. The detective is closely related to the assassin. The urge to remember and the compulsion to forget are locked in complicity.

## The Violent Self

The violent self waiting on motorway nights,  
another blue departure,  
a ghostly transit mystery  
stalking the space of terrorist gestures,  
a drive-by provocation  
a face like a statue  
in the passing headlights,  
a shadow encounter.



## Noir Logic

There was no gun sister  
but when we were exchanging  
words and kisses  
my gimlet eyes  
my shop bought soul  
turned their romance  
into stones  
and when he had swallowed  
a bellyful  
he sank, he drowned.  
As I did too  
having lost track  
of who was who,  
the mirrors,  
the smoke,  
the damned dreaminess  
of the aquarium,  
the shiny screen.  
Tell me again,  
who were we?  
Why did we do  
what we had to do?

## The Crystal Image of Time

The author is dead; long live the author. We must not forget that, as Barthes reminds us in *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, the author has an after-life as a character. No longer a voice telling the story, connecting us to the quantum space of fiction, the author becomes subsumed into the story. In the same city, but decades before Barthes declared the death of the author, Proust applied the quantum physics of the novel to memory. Rousseau gave us the autobiography as philosophy. Carlyle declared the biography essential to history. Proust took autobiography beyond the Newtonian causality and teleology of them both. He was an ailing god writing to the God who had so recently died, making and unmaking time at the end of gods. Time collides in his works, Deleuze's Bergsonian conceptualization of time as multiple is made immanent: the time of habit, of memory and of eternal return are all brought into play simultaneously. That simultaneity gives us the crystal image of time. Author and time implode. Marcel disappears in his story, becomes the Marcel who waits for Albertine, who writes about waiting, about remembering waiting. Don't forget the reader too, the self who reads, the self remembering reading Marcel remembering.



## The Culprit

He has a key  
and in case he can't unlock the box,  
a case of sharp knives to prize apart  
the unmanned climates of my privacy.

The trees, the trees,  
whispering in the uneasy breeze  
they hold the line.  
They send the birds as their brave emissaries.

"I am a fissure of men" he says,  
"the jagged blade of unbecoming,  
the first criminal crack that is god,  
the broken blue eye of noon."



## The Names of All Her Dolls

All the names of her dolls.  
She remembered all the names of all her dolls.  
Their blind faces lined up,  
a silent jury in the nursery  
bearing witness to the blue blurred busyness  
in the feral shadows of infancy.  
There is only the memory of all the names,  
her dolls;  
the rest is a blanket of forgetting,  
something clean and cold,  
soft like snow.  
But she remembered all the names  
of all her dolls  
of the blind jury in the nursery.

## The Author Disappears Into The Novel

Proust was not the only author to disappear into his novel. Kafka becomes Josef K, both disappears and doubles himself. The demarcation between the fictitious alter ego and fictional character becomes impossible to delineate with any certainty. The author is no longer a god; he is Schrödinger's cat. Whilst the age of convergence has made the quantum logic, the multiplicity and mutability, the mise en abyme logic of story-telling apparent across media and cultural forms the novel is still the cultural vehicle par excellence for those who want to transubstantiate, to disappear into fictive, quantum realm of virtual reality. They do not have to renounce the public sphere as Salinger and Pynchon chose to do. It is easier than that. They can play themselves in Vanity Fair and still disappear as Bret Easton Ellis demonstrates so brilliantly in *Lunar Park*. In his fictitious autobiography his characters become real and hunt him down. The evil his imagination has (really) unleashed comes back to (fictively) annihilate him. The repressed returns – the question of the moral duty of the novel which he so emphatically challenged in *American Psycho* comes back to haunt him, but this haunting has the quality of a horror film, is comic and hyperbolic. The reader is left to wonder if this is real literary guilt or a pastiche of conscience, a joke at their expense. Both.

## Darker

It was getting darker and Lysandros was afraid of the dark. He recounted a childhood memory, remembering the beginning of darkness and waiting. Both his parents worked long hours, running a clothing factory. He and his sister were cared for by a nanny who was sweetness and light in his parents' company, so charming that they would never have believed how monstrously she behaved when left alone with the children. She would punish Lysandros by locking him the cellar, in the dank, dusty darkness for hours, minutes, perhaps centuries. Whole lifetimes he'd wait in the cellar, afraid that the moths would burst through their fat hard chrysalises, would find him there, and caress him with their terrible furry wings. He'd conjure up that darkness in the warm glow of Mustafa's north London living room. I strain to hear the grain of his voice as he told that story. I recall the candles flickering, Mustafa tending the flames. He harvested the light for Lysandros.

I can't hear him anymore; I've forgotten his voice. Although if he called tomorrow I'd recognise him. Hello? Lysandros? Is that you? I don't know if he wrote the story down, I don't have it to hand. Sitting here amongst piles of old poems, flyers for performances, newspaper cuttings, I don't trust my memory. Perhaps that small boy waiting in the dark is some one else, not yet born, the memory is a premonition that I dreamt was Lysandros. I used to love moths when I was a child, their hand span limpid powdered wings rippling the air. There was urgency in Lysandros' writing. He was writing against time:

my days are numbered,  
like the beating of a digital clock,  
rearranging its numerals in sequence in the glow of the dark,  
silently, inexorably,  
marking the passage of regularity with its sombre numbers  
and every beat is a new moment,  
every life is a revelation,  
every memory.

He was writing to make himself anew with each sentence, and also to save

himself, to leave a trace:

"staring at my own eyes and exploring their light  
oh what obsessions, what pleasures still lay unrecorded  
lost papers, lost poems, lost pleasures"

Writing for posterity, in order to leave a textual presence, but the act of writing itself was as important for him, its physicality as well as the transcendence of that physicality. In Poem, he says that “the Poem is not transcendent”, that it not a “fortress of truth”, “the poem is no solution”.

“The Poem is nothing more or less than myself,  
the cage of bone and dream in which we sing a song already written for us.”

When Lysandros speaks of the poem “as a song already written for us” he seems to alluding to a kind of destiny. This could be just the traditional Mediterranean fatalism that causes us to still wear ancient talismans to ward off the evil eye but to me it’s also a sense that language itself is a kind of destiny. Language speaks us. All our poetry is a play, a permutation of words that whisper reminders of other words, other poems, and other lives. The food on the table is fresh, but we fill our mouths with the silver syntax of ancient cutlery.

## The Eclipse

The eclipse begins. The moon covers the sun, the ghost of the shadow.

"Who are you?"

"Is that you?"

It's so dark ("Euridyce?" ) in the golden light.

Disrobing, revealing her nothingness,

facts are more easily forgotten than feelings. Guilt replaces desire.

An eternal return of the destiny written on your forehead, an unreadable heritage, the mystic writing pad of history.

Memory causes vertigo, a vortex of feelings: desire, altitude sickness, inherited amnesia.

We mourn the inability to forget.

You remember something has been forgotten.

A crystal image of time destroys the past, a full moon of forgetting, to save the future.

I'm waiting for the future, l'avenir, the one whose arrival cannot be predicted.

They are ruined maps, the languages that speak us, your head on my shoulder, your hand on my thigh.

The moon covers the sun again.

## I Can't Afford to Shop Therefore I Can't Fully Exist

What gives the examination of the fluctuating self urgency is the way that the stable negative interpellations of the state are ameliorated and resisted through the construction of fluid cultural identities that are inexorably gobbled up and regurgitated by global capitalism, transforming politics into aesthetics. Althusser's policeman and God, the church and the state, have been joined by a third, powerful interpellator: the market. Think of Camelot's advertisements for the lottery, a divine finger seductively promising "it could be you." A contemporary exploration of identity needs to address how we might move on from the artist Barbara Kruger's postmodern cogito "I shop therefore I am." (Untitled 1987) and its negation 'I can't afford to shop therefore I can't fully exist'.





## The Logan Thesis

Logan is right:  
Carousel is a lie.  
There is no sanctuary.  
Input is contrary to established data.  
Then: bouf, explosions,  
a confusion of squealing youth  
in violet, teal and tangerine  
polyester and elastene.  
We must die at thirty,  
we can only live on  
if we cross the ice  
and subsist on feline affection  
and scraps of poetry  
in a ruined library.

Café Trieste, San Francisco

I'm sorry but  
you know how it ends,  
even if you haven't seen the film,  
and I have  
again and again in the dark  
in a satisfying stupor of glamour and grief :  
that room of mirrors,  
of crooked and cracked reflections.  
Our conversations flow  
easy and full of possibilities  
but I'm not going to turn up  
or return your calls.  
They'll shrill unanswered  
your voice echoing in the bewildered  
loneliness of 121.  
Because I know how it ends,  
in the deserted funfair  
in recriminations and shattered glass.  
We're not meeting in the aquarium.  
We're not hiding out in Chinatown.  
I'm not playing anymore.  
You need more than luck  
in Shanghai.

## Echo and Narcissus Dance Architecture

“You might,  
you might as well  
dance architecture”  
he said.

“Dance architecture”  
she said.  
They did.

“Love,  
love cannot save me from  
the music of loneliness”  
he said.

“The music of loneliness”  
she said.



## Subterranean

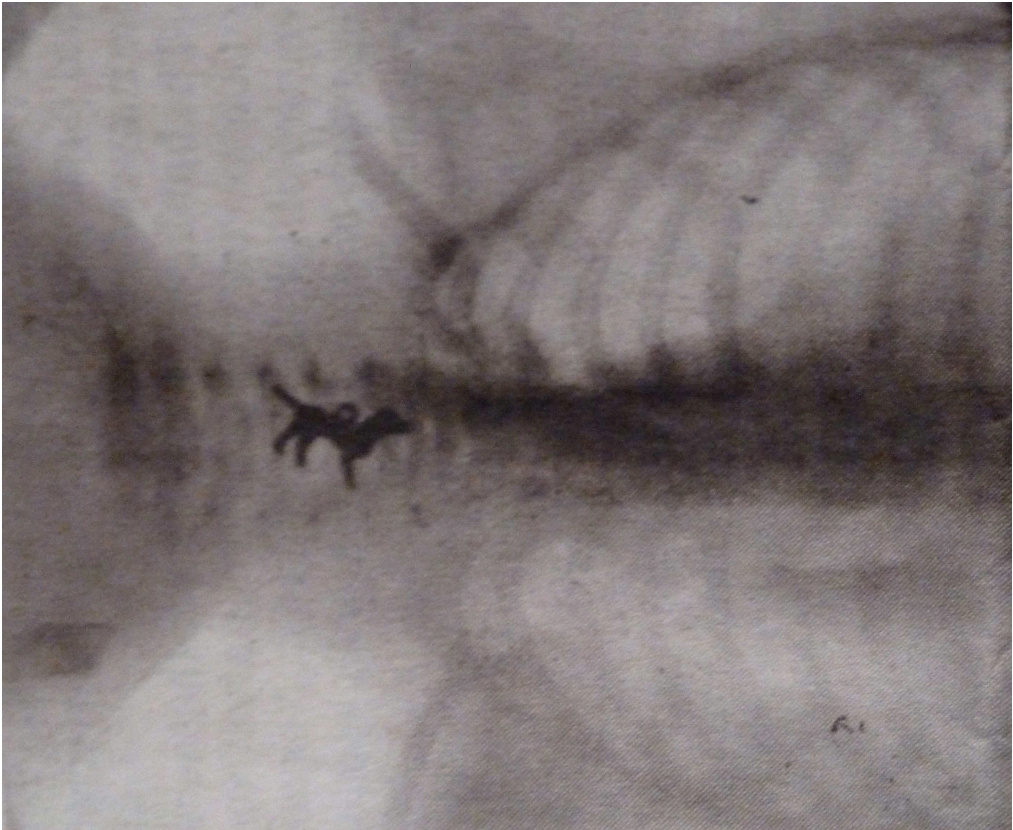
At times the river runs underground,  
the idea is no longer visible,  
yet if you put your ear to the ground  
and listen very carefully,  
the music carries on.

At times the surface is a desert  
but the baked earth is not all there is,  
the gushing subterranean springs  
still rush towards the sea.

## The Stream Becomes a Hall of Mirrors

Xavier Marias writes a novel (*Dark Back of Time*) about the reaction to a previous novel (*All Souls*), which he reports was read as a roman a clef when it was really fiction, and then recounts the 'real' results of the reaction to the fiction. *Dark Back of Time* is the first in Marias' *Your Face Tomorrow* trilogy, a rambling, interconnected web of fictive and autobiographical stories. He writes about the real/mythical kingdom of Redonda, an uninhabited Caribbean island near Antigua and Barbuda, and its third King the poet John Gawsworth. After the novel was published Marias really did become the King of Redonda, which turned out to really exist. During his reign he has conferred titles upon fellow writers who weave themselves into their fiction and out of reality. Pamuk, Magris, Sebald and Coetzee are all Dukes of Redonda. Like Marias they all appear in and then disappear into the quantum world of fiction. Their long sentences are ripples from the modernist stream of consciousness but they are dryer, more self-conscious, more scrupulous and less sensual than their modernist precursors Woolf or Joyce. In Istanbul Orhan Pamuk remembers the 'disappearing game' he played at his mother's dressing table mirror as a child, and was later to re-enact in his novels, of losing himself in the mirror's "green infinity" and the fractured, multiple *mise en abyme* of his reflection. This is a trait these writers all share. They reflect and are multiplied by the selves they produce in the liminal space between fiction and reality. The stream becomes an introspective hall of mirrors. Pirandello's characters came in search of an author. Now authors go in search of themselves as character/s. They hunt themselves like prey.







Dreams You're Leaving, Port of Spain

Oh god though  
the eternal return  
the destiny thing

the eternal return  
takes desire hostage.

I'll keep all your broken  
promises in the obsolete  
machinery of my heart.

A woman is walking  
outside death row.

In my dreams you're leaving.

## The Concept of Dread

To delineate the emotions,  
not through the thoughts that furnish them,  
but through the physical manifestations  
which are only made visible  
through metaphor  
and are thus the shadows  
(or should that be substance?)  
of the emotions that derive from,  
drive them.

To clarify: if this were Jeopardy

The answers might be:

What is panic?

What is dread?



## Becoming the Future Now

1. The starting point is a child like refrain ...  
Even the first time is a repetition.  
Becoming the Future in the time of habit

We were born in the future, the future-now of windy Arndale centres,  
of the Bullring, the ring road, the road movie,  
the motorway service station, of cold synth songs of love.  
Often we felt that we ourselves  
  had invented the dying world around us,  
the empty colonnades, the reversed perspectives,  
omens of departure.  
We spent hours playing back  
particular facial grimaces  
or shots of staircases.

Please enter your personal identification number.  
Your password is no longer valid.

We ate Angel's Delight and watched Tomorrow's World.

We were never young,  
always aware our built in obsolescence,  
the apocalypse already overdue.

Please do not exceed your recommended daily allowance.  
Cabin pressure will adjust automatically.

We are waiting in the transit lounge,  
between borders, docile and delayed,  
looking out on  
immense runways leading to no conceivable sky,  
longing to be duty free.  
We are queuing with our papers,  
our hearts ticking like bombs,  
our irises hungry for recognition  
journeying through a succession of nightmare way-stations  
long delays in semi-derelict bus depots and car rental offices,

queasy taxi rides slumped in the rear seat



behind dark glasses.

Error 404 document not found.

The next service will arrive in approximately 4 minutes.

That command is invalid, please restart your computer now.

I'm waiting, but not for the future

that is inevitable, the conclusion

to the sentence I currently serve.

I'm waiting for the Other,

whose arrival I cannot predict, preordain, expect.

I watch the other passengers.

A frenzy of hope, this kind of waiting,

waiting as running,

a waiting that does not watch the clock,

or sit still.

I'm asking strangers the way

to l'avenir

so I can will what will be,

meet an unrecognizeable future,  
a strange new destiny.

Even the dead can dream.

2.Repetition is essentially inscribed in need...  
becoming the Future in the time of memory.

This imaginary city, the future, is built according to the routes  
dreamers remember from their dream,  
it shimmers and oscillates between competing projections,  
the dominating corporate image-screens which exist to announce its  
ownership  
and the miniscule ones which operate in intimate proximity to the body.

The hotel, the hospital, bar; prison, funfair, airport, seaport;  
all are marked as regulatory spaces with 'precise and determined  
functions',  
some punitive, some offering temporary sanctuary.

For the most part they kept to themselves,  
twilight guest of the abandoned motels  
where no rent would ever be charged  
or memories ever be repaid.

A moving target is harder to hit,  
that's the theory, the plan  
I've been working to.  
But what if you've already been shot?  
Well, still best to keep moving,  
and if the affected part is infected  
then eat it. Eat your own shadow.  
Hard to stomach but everything is at stake.  
Here where I'm high in no-place,  
in the international airspace between my day and your night,  
I remind myself of the grammar of your goodbye:

I keep reciting your words,  
it's my mantra, my ticket out, freedom.  
But I know I'm going to call you

whenever I get wherever I'm going  
and the actual distance will give me virtual courage.

"Do you still love me?" I ask you then,  
"like you never loved me?"  
And you say yes. Yes.  
That yes is the bullet I shoot myself with...

(What takes place in the system  
between resonating series  
under the influence of the dark precursor  
is called 'epiphany'.)

Yet the spaces of our dreams are insubstantial,  
there is a light, ethereal, transparent space,  
or a dark, rough, encumbered space;  
a space from above, of summits,  
or on the contrary a space from below of mud;  
or again a space that can be flowing like sparkling water,  
or space that is fixed, congealed, like stone or crystal."

Somewhere in these intimate conjunctions of flesh and geometry,  
of memory, tenderness and desire  
was a key to the vivid air,  
to that new time and space.

The remembered future city is not necessarily beautiful  
but it is not merely the absence of the fugitive dream,  
maps the flows and currents created by the event and the encounter,  
by chance and coincidence,  
by the present drift of your future hopes.

Space exploration is a branch of applied geometry, with many affinities to  
pornography.

We will move on,  
to the towns and cities of the south,  
to the sleepwalking children in the parks,  
to the dreaming mothers  
and fathers embalmed in their homes,

waiting to be woken from the present  
into the infinite realm of their time-filled selves.

3. Repetition is never a historical fact  
but rather the historical condition  
under which something new is effectively produced.  
Becoming the Future in the time of destiny.

In this demented time outside the curve which gave it a god, time unfolds  
instead of things unfolding within it; time overturns the ground of  
memory. We produce something new only on condition that we repeat –  
once in the mode which constitutes the past, and once more in the  
present of metamorphosis,  
the absolutely new itself is nothing but repetition,  
this time by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return.

We drift from the electric spaces of non-places via the slow-motion  
high impact crash to broken, bloody, biological bodies  
and then to the flow of water,  
the stasis of snow;  
narratives become fractured and carried away by the currents of  
electricity, blood, water, dreams driving through the walls to the water,  
nocturnal gifts to the electric city from the breakable body.

The claim of the present is precisely that it passes, flows away.  
The present exists, but the past alone insists.  
So how are we to unstitch the sense we made of it,  
in the line of flight, in the time of Eros?

A scar is the sign not of past wounds  
but of the present fact of having been wounded.  
We produce something new only on condition that we repeat  
– once in the mode which constitutes the past,  
– and once more in the present of metamorphosis.

“Living on the borderlines of the ‘present’...we find ourselves in the  
moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex  
figures of difference,  
a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction,  
in the ‘beyond’: an exploratory, restless movement ...  
au-dela, here and there, and fort/da back and forth....



Being in the “beyond” then is to inhabit an intervening space...  
to touch the future on the other side .”

Go ask the boys in mergers and acquisitions,  
ask them who they’re holding out for  
in the takeover wars between desire and technology.  
Ask them to give you a future price on love.

What do you mean by home?  
That over furnished earthbound hovel  
where obsolete machines  
weep their rusty sepia dreams? Oh please.

I was never one for breakfast, or families.  
My Sundays were never lugubrious with roasts.  
Instead I haunted empty libraries, long deserted avenues  
of wisdom and incidental sadnesses.

All that luxuriant loneliness, those long histories of haunting,  
I never wanted the things everyone else did,  
preferred hotels to houses, strangers to friends.  
Kisses and cars meant little to me, or only in passing.

It’s not my war, this war between desire and technology,  
since desire is my technology.  
Though I’m fucked if I know the difference  
between a technology and an epistemology.

Perhaps love, like a fork, is both. Language and cutlery  
hide in the warm darkness of the mouth.  
I once made a promise as sharp as a prison knife.  
Yes, I killed a man, and I did my time.

I am an undercover mercenary for a failed state. I am a fugitive suicide.  
No, that’s not true, I am a compulsive liar  
who always dreamed of being a lone assassin,  
a murderer of memories, a secret agent for the state of forgetting.

Go ask the boys in mergers and acquisitions,

What do you mean by home?

I was never one for breakfast, or families,  
all that luxuriant loneliness, those long histories of haunting.

It's not my war, this war between desire and technology.

Perhaps love, like a fork, is both language and cutlery.

I am an undercover mercenary for a failed state. I am a fugitive suicide.

Go ask the boys in mergers and acquisitions.

Ask them to give you a future price on love.

## The Full Moon of Forgetting

As you fall into the embrace  
of silent senselessness  
the moon is not malevolent yet  
but what will happen when even her name  
escapes you?

This city is becoming a stranger now.  
The bus routes no longer seem to run  
to their old destinations,  
contracting, leaving blank suburbs  
where the traffic clogs up the streets  
and robs them of their designations.  
The buses are gone,  
retreating into places of unnamings  
where meanings and memories are unravelling  
and love and grief become indistinguishable.  
The bus shelter is suddenly filled  
with gaggles of giggling school girls  
all blandly blondly indistinguishable.  
Everything turns to snow and indifference.  
You chew on the rind of darkness  
until sleep bleeds unowned desires and fears.  
The taste of your terror can't nourish you  
and yet still through waking nightmares,  
suddenly a pale face looms  
through the thin curtains.  
Some one from your past betrayed?  
Some vital deed left half done?  
You know you know  
her but the name  
escapes you once again  
and the tip of your tongue burns  
with the bitter taste of ... nothing

Memory in the Dead Zone :  
a multimedia performance

#### ACT ONE: The Time Machine

A woman in a bare room, two chairs facing each other, a coffee table and a small table indicate a threadbare living room /office from the past.; seeks to remember what it is that needs to be forgotten about her childhood in the enclave years in Nicosia from 1968 to 1974. She explores the rupture of war, and of memory by walking the Green Line, the forbidden zones of the border between north and south in Cyprus, remembering lost ones and by listening to Orpheus and Eurydice in the Underworld via an old radio.

Moving between different pasts , between Cyprus and a host of unnamed cities, Memory in the Dead Zone is both a multimedia retelling of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice and autobiographical performance which explores memory and the performance of becoming Cypriot through poetry, myth, home movies, photographs, remembered songs, and all the digital detritus of the 21st century.

Memory becomes opaque as the performance makes a story about the mediated evidence that summons memory, the faded images, the home movies marked by multiple translations from super 8 film to video to DVD, remixed pop songs and fragments of film from Cyprus in the 1960s.

The Performer, shrouded in canvas, enters carrying a suitcase.

The recorded voice:

Do you still wake up in the night  
and start listing what you'd take  
if you had to leave  
all over again  
and start again?

The refugee rule:

one suitcase per single person,  
two per family.

Will it be your notebooks,  
the photos?

Which of your favourite shoes?

The good winter coat, surely.

Perhaps one of the Persian carpets  
- then nothing else at all.

What would you rescue?

Does it still wake you,  
the contradiction between your siege  
mentality hoarding everything  
against sudden shortages,  
old candle stubs even  
because they could suddenly cut off  
the electricity;  
and the refugee sense  
that you can only truly own  
one suitcase full of stuff.

The rest is contingent.

It isn't really yours.

The rest will have to be left behind.

The performer places the suitcase on the coffee table and places her veil of canvas over the suitcase as screen. As the lights go out she reads a letter.

PERFORMER:

Don't read this letter.  
Not this letter,  
read the other letter:  
the one I didn't write,  
the one I didn't send,  
the one delivered to the wrong address.  
It's impossible to articulate this desire  
with all the disappointments  
we've brought to it.  
Read my other letter:  
the story of absence,  
the epic verse of waiting.

The lights go out and the time machine film with soundtrack is projected on the suitcase /screen.



PERFORMER:

When I was a child there was lots of sex; and car  
crashes.

I heard them talking when I was supposed to be asleep.

Their voices and the tinkling jazz of ice.

Their conversations and the fug of their cigarette  
smoke

would drift to the shadowy shores of my room.

Straight through the windscreen

on the mountain roads;

suicides, fur coats, sunglasses,

poker, Rothmans, spies.

They used to play cards after I had gone to bed.

Some with passion and intensity,

others with the grim determination

of prisoners doing time.

Love affairs,  
international conspiracies,  
double agents,  
rumours of war.  
Adults swathed in scent and smoke,  
gorgeous with boredom  
and the fatalism of wasted lives.  
Green lines, international law,  
the incipient wrinkles,  
the writing on their foreheads  
always spelt out the past and future tense  
of war.

PERFORMER: The truth of the image resides in its frailty,  
the fleeting gesture captured and burnt,  
inscribed on film.  
the golden circles at the end of the reel,  
the top of the screen filled by a widening wave  
of analogue interference on video,  
pixelating in digital translation.  
The electric ghosts lose none of their energy  
become more and transparent  
facing annihilation and nonrepresentation,  
destined for abstraction .  
The memories of machines are as capricious  
as our own.



Sound piece (part of soundtrack)

EURYDICE: I cross the river every day, several times, through the corridors and tunnels, the underworld underground.

ORPHEUS: I thought you were waiting when all the while you were leaving.

EURYDICE: It would be easy to say our eyes are dead, but only because we're all killing time.

ORPHEUS: You veil yourself in forgetting.

EURYDICE: This is the city where dreams are blank windows reflecting only sky.

ORPHEUS: Down here we're all always strangers.

EURYDICE: What are the chances you'd find me here after all these years?

ORPHEUS: This journey of yours has no grand trajectory, is an everyday back and forth across the city.

EURYDICE: The years fall away like sleeping, dark and easy, slick with dreaming.

ORPHEUS: Did you dread that I, and a whole army of other spies and private detectives, that life, would finally track you down?

EURYDICE: This journey, everyday, across the city. I'm not waiting I'm leaving.

ORPHEUS: Yet still, how near to me you seem.

EURYDICE: Don't come looking for me anymore.

ORPHEUS: You lie beside me but you've gone.

EURYDICE: I've been leaving for a long time, in increments.

ORPHEUS: What are the chances I'd find you?

EURYDICE: The years fall away like sleeping, dark and easy, slick with dreaming.

EURYDICE: Not waiting, but leaving like sleeping.

PERFORMER:       The eclipse will begin.  
                      The moon will cover the sun.  
                      The ghost will meet it's shadow,  
                      Disrobing, revealing her nothingness.  
                      Facts are more easily forgotten than feelings.  
                      Guilt replaces desire.  
                      Who are you?  
                      Is that you?

We mourn the inability to forget.  
We remember something  
has been forgotten.  
We are ruined maps,  
the languages that speak us.  
Your head on my shoulder,  
your hand on my thigh,  
the moon will cover  
the sun again.

## ACT TWO: The Screen Machine



This act screens collective and mythic memories appropriated and remediated moments from Makmalbahr's 'Kandahar', Tarkovsky's 'Solaris', Hitchcock's 'Vertigo', Resnais' 'Last Year in Marienbad' and Wong Kar Wei's '2046'.

The performer moves the suitcase off the coffee table and sets up a washing line, as she does she speaks.

### PERFORMER:

Everyone is lonely now  
which is strange  
given the shortage of space

and the availability  
of dancing shoes  
at discount prices.  
At night the ambulances mourn,  
a wailing classical chorus,  
countless tragedies  
incidentally weaving  
through my thin dreams.  
I did not leave  
any forwarding information,  
no number or address,  
and still you won't call  
or reply to my unsent letters,  
for the best I guess  
as there is no fireplace,  
no flames to consume your words  
in my tiny room.

An automated voice announces:

The museum will be closing soon  
leaving the gods and goddesses alone  
in darkened rooms  
where all promises have turned to stone.  
In the December mist  
a canary yellow tram stops at Alexanderplatz,  
a gipsy accordionist is playing in the street.

Time has proved me wrong:  
all of it is happening in an eternal present.  
All of it is unalterably and infinitely gone.

The performer takes a lefkara lace table cloth from the suitcase and  
pegs the cloth to the line. She sits behind the cloth/screen. The screen/  
machine film is projected on the screen



Recorded voices:

ORPHEUS: What is your name?

EURYDICE: Nefes (Breath).

ORPHEUS: Who are you?

EURYDICE: I am the bride's cousin.

ORPHEUS: Snow. Is that you?

EURYDICE: Where are you?

ORPHEUS: Come here.

EURYDICE: It's so dark.

THE PRINCESS: Even the immortals  
experience this process.  
Our cabin attendants are superbly designed  
but there's one problem  
when they've served  
on so many long journeys,  
fatigue begins to set in.

THE CHORUS: They might want to laugh,  
but the smile will be too slow to come.  
They might want to cry,  
but the tear won't well up  
until the next day.

ORPHEUS: This one is failing fast.  
I think you'd better give up.

EURYDICE: When I was at my most disappointed  
I considered giving up.  
But I was soon trying again.

THE CHORUS: Do you know what people did in the old days  
when they had secrets?  
They'd climb a mountain and find a tree...

ORPHEUS: I slowly began to doubt myself.

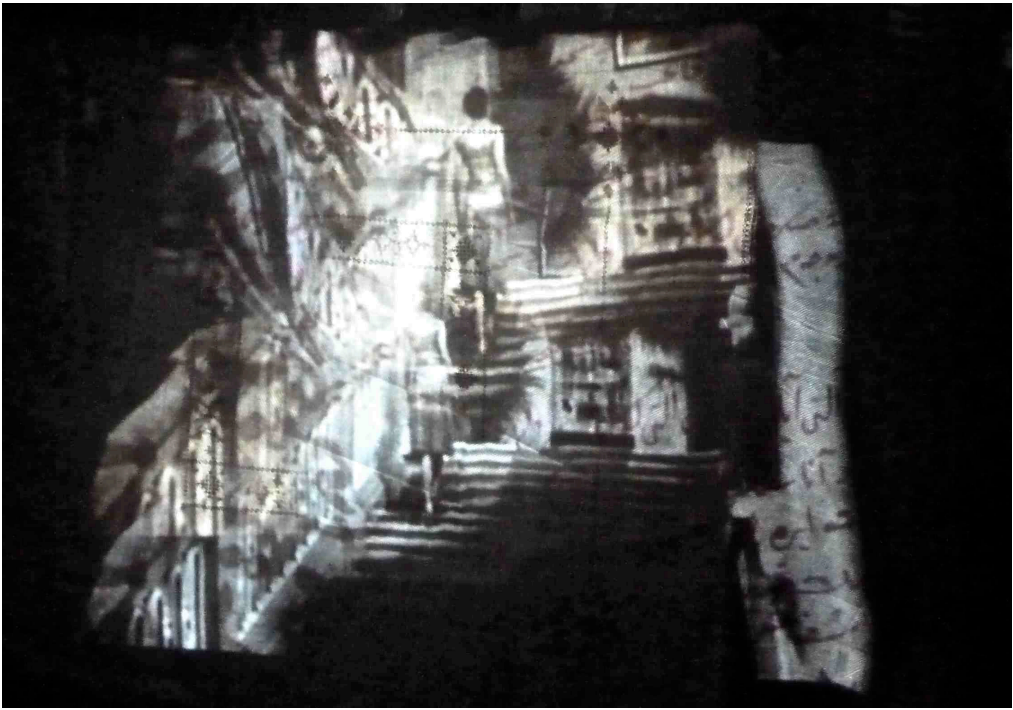
ORPHEUS: You were waiting for me.

EURYDICE: No. Why should I be?

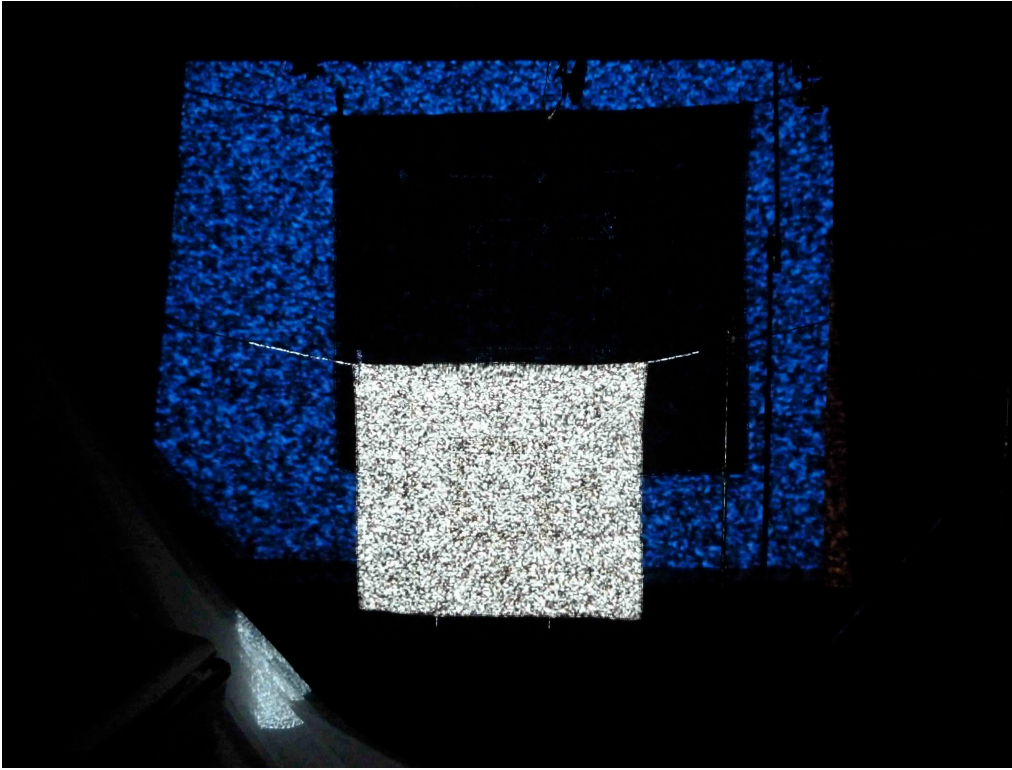
ORPHEUS: I've waited a long time for you.

EURYDICE: In your dreams?





### ACT THREE: The Death Machine



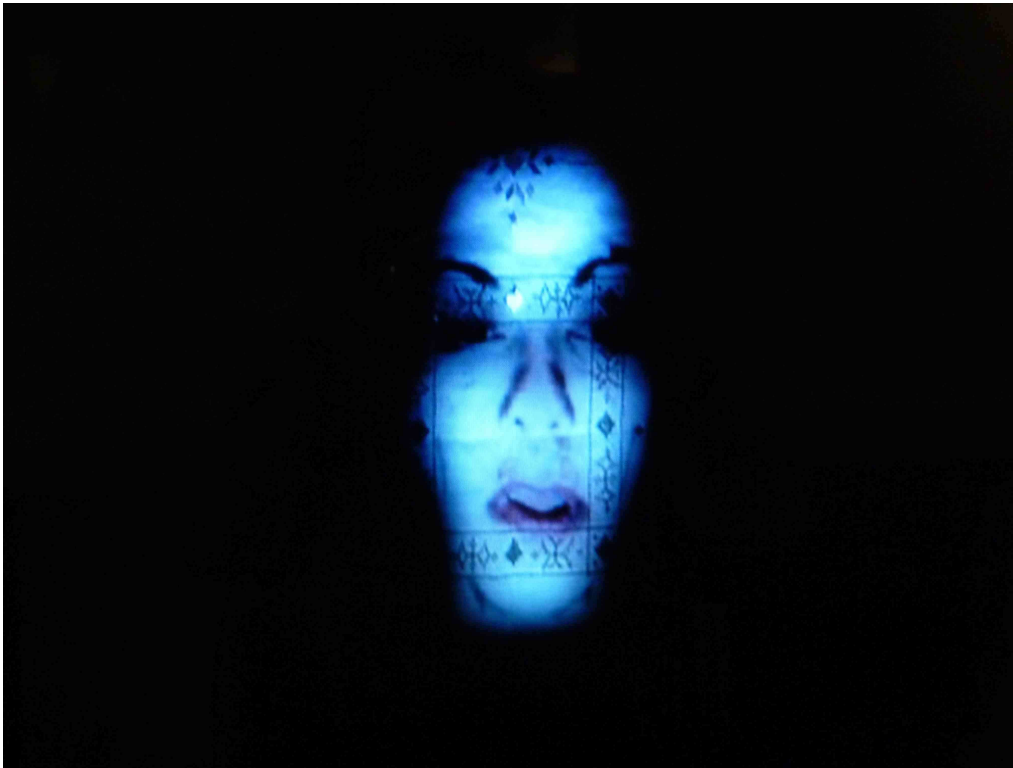
The screen at the back of the stage projects the death machine film (the snow of broken transmission ,

PERFORMER:On the last day of his life, in the afternoon Lysandros whispered his last poem about Apollo, the gleaming warrior now disguised as a thousand reeling birds, and slipped irretrievably from the spoken to the written word. The flowers were white. He'd written: "Anoint me with white flowers when I lose my blessed breath" although there was no "crown of white flowers, jasmine, held by a golden thread".

I can't quite capture the grain of his voice, the cadences of his speech, the swoop of a downward inflection at the end of each line but I can still hear the sound of the handful of earth each mourner flung on the coffin. Years later, when the tidy little suitcase that held Lysandros' work was opened, poems spilled out, yellow pages like doves, jaundiced with age, or bleached ravens. Silence flocked and filled the room; the air was heavy, as if rippled by invisible moths. His words are a challenge to that silence, if not a refutation of it, while I am putting words on a dead man's eyes. In whose shiny currency are my words minted? Where is the most unjust betrayal? Mourning erases the lost ones, translates them always and only as absence.

#### ACT FOUR : The Desire Machine: becoming Cypriot

Using the isadora programme the performer projects her face through the cloth via a camera in her laptop.



An automated voice speaks:

“ What takes place in the system between resonating series under the influence of the dark precursor is called ‘epiphany’”.

PERFORMER:

The starting point is a childlike refrain ... Even the first time is a repetition: becoming

the Future in the time of habit.

We were born in the future, the future-now of windy Arndale centres,

of the Bullring, the ring road, the road movie,

the motorway service station, of cold synth songs of love.

Often we felt that we ourselves

had invented the dying world around us,

the empty colonnades, the reversed perspectives,

omens of departure.

We spent hours playing back

particular facial grimaces

or shots of staircases.

An automated voice speaks:

Please enter your personal identification number.

Your password is no longer valid.

PERFORMER:

We ate Angel's Delight and watched Tomorrow's World.

We were never young, always aware our built in obsolescence,  
the apocalypse already overdue.

An automated voice speaks:

Please do not exceed your recommended daily allowance.

Cabin pressure will adjust automatically.

PERFORMER:        We are waiting in the transit lounge,  
                              between borders, docile and delayed,  
                              looking out on  
                              immense runways leading to no conceivable sky,  
                              longing to be duty free.  
                              We are queuing with our papers,  
                              our hearts ticking like bombs,  
                              our irises hungry for recognition  
                              journeying through a succession of nightmare way-  
                              stations  
                              long delays in semi-derelict bus depots and car rental  
                              offices,  
                              queasy taxi rides slumped in the rear seat  
                              behind dark glasses.

An automated voice speaks:

Error 404 document not found.

The next service will arrive in approximately 4 minutes.

That command is invalid, please restart your computer now.

PERFORMER: I'm waiting, but not for the future that is inevitable,  
the conclusion to the sentence I currently serve.  
I'm waiting for the Other,  
whose arrival I cannot predict, preordain, expect.  
I watch the other passengers.  
A frenzy of hope, this kind of waiting,  
waiting as running,  
a waiting that does not watch the clock,  
or sit still.  
I'm asking strangers the way to l'avenir  
so I can will what will be,  
meet an unrecognizeable future,  
a strange new destiny.  
Even the dead can dream.

An automated voice speaks:  
What takes place in the system  
between resonating series  
under the influence of the dark precursor  
is called 'epiphany'.  
Repetition is essentially inscribed in need...  
becoming the Future in the time of memory.

PERFORMER:  
For the most part they kept to themselves,  
twilight guest of the abandoned motels  
where no rent would ever be charged

or memories ever be repaid.

A moving target is harder to hit,  
that's the theory, the plan  
I've been working to.

But what if you've already been shot?

Well, still best to keep moving,  
and if the affected part is infected  
then eat it. Eat your own shadow.

Hard to stomach but everything is at stake.

Somewhere in these intimate conjunctions of flesh and geometry,  
of memory, tenderness and desire  
was a key to the vivid air,  
to that new time and space.

Space exploration is a branch of applied geometry,  
with many affinities to pornography.

We will move on,  
to the towns and cities of the south,  
to the sleepwalking children in the parks,  
to the dreaming mothers  
and fathers embalmed in their homes,  
waiting to be woken from the present  
into the infinite realm of their time-filled selves.

An automated voice speaks:

Repetition is never a historical fact but rather the historical condition  
under which something new is effectively produced.

Becoming the Future in the time of destiny.



PERFORMER:

In this demented time outside the curve which gave it a god, time unfolds  
instead of

things unfolding within it; time overturns the ground of memory. We  
produce

something new only on condition that we repeat

- once in the mode which constitutes the past,
- and once more in the present of metamorphosis,

the absolutely new itself is nothing but repetition,

this time by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return.

The claim of the present is precisely that it passes, flows away.

The present exists, but the past alone insists.

A scar is the sign not of past wounds

but of the present fact of having been wounded.

An automated voice speaks:

We produce something new only on condition that we repeat

- once in the mode which constitutes the past,
- and once more in the present of metamorphosis.

PEFORMER:

Becoming Cypriot is a goddess who leaves on a wave on the sea,

becoming Cypriot is an angry god for a father, a tree for a daughter, a

stone for a

lover.

We produce something new only on condition that we repeat

– once in the mode which constitutes the past, and once more in the present of metamorphosis.

Eternal return is not faith, but the truth of faith ...  
and two believers cannot observe each other without laughing.

Becoming Cypriot is the repetition of myths.  
Becoming Cypriot is amnesia.

I let you call me Ariadne, no harm nor lie in that my love.  
But there's more, much more.  
I am the maze.  
I am the Minotaur.





## A Minute Taker at the Conference of Birds: on Sufi symmetry

Something that A wrote reminded me of a time I haven't lived, a place I haven't seen, under an open slate grey sky. I came to the tower (the blue plaque read 'Rapunzel cried here') at dusk, in the autumn. Don't ask me when, I can't remember whether we wore our trousers tight or flared that year, whether we dressed like gypsies, soldiers or porn stars, whose song played everywhere, leaked out in every café and bar. It was in the time of forty days – the measure of time they mark you out with when you are born, when you give birth, when you are lost in the wilderness, after you die. It was that kind of time, which is all the time in world; is no time: the time you measure when everything no longer makes sense.

I could see all the world from the tower. All the world I could see was empty. There was no one but me. I sang and the echoes orchestrated me, the wind carried me across the desert. No one heard me. I waited. I waited for the one who tracks my invisible footprints. I waited for the one who knows my name, who comes to find me. Whoever you are, I kept watch for you, a tiny figure on the horizon. Believe me it was a cinematic moment. No one filmed it. No one disturbed the elegant line of the horizon but the great flocks of birds that filled the sky. That winter they flew south at a distance: geese, flamingos, little birds whose names I didn't know. I'd come well prepared for solitude and lots of walking but my knowledge of ornithology was, still is, nil.

I shared the tower with birds. My room was filled with ravens and doves. They cooed. They clawed. They crowded me. I remembered what Aamer wrote, that the Sufi sage had said the doves were our nobler feelings, the ravens our anger, our fear, our doubt. The Sufi said I must free the doves, let them fly free; but should keep the ravens locked in or they'd only return with their malevolence redoubled, to shatter the windows, demolish the tower.

In truth I wanted them all gone. They blurred my vision, got caught in my hair. They deafened me. I tried. I did as he said. But the doves (oh, in my darker moments I see only albino pigeons) kept coming back to roost, breeding in the eaves enthusiastically, back in the overcrowded room again. The ravens grew thin, grew restive, they pecked at me, ate the doves' eggs, hatched conspiracies in the darker corners of the room. I lived in a flurry of feathers: birds battering to get out, birds battering to get back in. And a lot of shit.

Let them all fly. I gave up. I left the tower, climbed down Rapunzel's dead plait, avoiding the thorns that blinded her lover. I set out across the sand. The horizon was a shifting curve ahead, the tower an inky black landmark behind me. I walked my words across the desert, letting the wind delete each phrase easefully with sibilant breaths before a sentence could reach any conclusion. I did not mind. It was a kind of mercy. I walked to find a story, to draw a line and mark a path to the sea. It was a journey. It was a map, a map of forgetting.

The birds were my compass. I knew I'd smell the salt, scent the open sea long before I reached the shore. I'd hear the scream of seagulls. I'd know I had arrived. A vulture kept me company. We shared the same dry sense of humour (useful in a desert). When I despaired he'd reassure me that he'd always stick with me until the end. Then further. When the time came he'd polish my bones, make them pretty. I was grateful. We must strive to keep up appearances, to maintain certain aesthetic standards. We must look our best irrespective of circumstance, despite the puzzling absence of a camera crew or paparazzi. After weeks of waiting we doubted we'd ever find the coast and he tried to comfort me. "Maybe you should give up on the ocean thing. Maybe that's too excessive an ambition for the season. Why don't we see if we can make it to the Salt Lake for the annual Conference of Birds?" A good idea, surely someone in that mirage of flamingos and nightingales, of eagles and swans, surely one of the delegates would have news? They'd know if there was Someone, the Someone who was waiting not knowing I'd been delayed and lost my way, the One who had set out to find me.

Back in the tower the ravens and the doves flourished and mated. A new species, a sleek grey ghost raven was born. Invisible at dusk and dawn, on a grey winter's afternoon, nameless equivocal creatures, they sang all of happiness, all of sadness, violence and tenderness; all of it and all at once. What is there to say of these mercury spun creatures with the habitual stealth of London's December afternoons, who steal the day from you before you are properly awake, who invade your dreams masquerading as presentiments and omens? They cannot be caged. They cannot be trained and tamed. They'll only sing when they feel like it.

Put your hands on this cage of bone. Feel them beating to escape from my ribs, a burst of wings, of feathered wildness, a beautiful terrible song. Send for the hawk to hunt them. Let it swoop and circle its prey mercilessly: a gorgeous symmetry.





Guilt Frame/ Screen Memory:  
the case of little 'a', a noir murder mystery



Guilt Frame/ Screen Memory:  
the case of little 'a', a noir murder mystery

Cinema, like myth, is now a structure of the unconscious, the screen of the Imaginary, the collective space of our dreaming. This collection of stolen voices and images considers the case of little 'a' – and the crime of matricide through the mating of unfilmed and misremembered moments from *Spellbound* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1945), *Gilda* (Charles Vidor, 1946), and *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958).

Cast:

GILDA

Rita Hayworth in *Gilda*

CARLOTTA

Kim Novak in *Vertigo*

JOHN

Gregory Peck in *Spellbound*

JOHNNY

Glen Ford in *Gilda*

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENCE

Jacques Lacan

COUNSEL FOR THE PROSECUTION

Luce Irigaray

JUDGE

Robert Calasso

ORPHEUS

himself

EURYDICE

herself

As the credits appear on black we hear the background noise of a busy railway station.

FEMALE VOICEOVER: This end-of-the-world polemic – that's all it is – plays with forms of language without any respect or regard for their meaning, order, beauty or generation.<sup>1</sup>

(automated)VOICE: The 16.00 train leaving from platform 5 will be the final train for M. Passengers are asked to undergo identification procedures in order to board the train.

A mobile phone rings.

GILDA: Hello?

(automated) VOICE 2: In this matter of the visible everything is a trap.<sup>2</sup>

GILDA: Jack? Is that you? Where are you? I can't see you. Jack?

Title:

1. Privation

(A demand directed to a lost object)

EXT. TRAIN STATION. LATE AFTERNOON. LATE NOVEMBER.

Gilda is walking down the platform wheeling a little case behind her. We watch her walk the length of the platform in her high heels and smart suit. It is the end of the world, an unassuming late November day in the near future (the ice is coming soon just as Anna Kavan promised) though Gilda is dressed for the 1940s.

EXT. AN INTERCITY TRAIN THUNDERS THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE

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<sup>1</sup> Luce Irigaray *The poverty of psychoanalysis* p.88 in ed. Margaret Whitford *The Irigaray Reader* Blackwell 1992

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Lacan *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* Peregrine 1987 p.93

An intercity train thunders through the winter afternoon. The sky is steely white, the forest black. All the trees are bare their dark arms point at the train like accusing fingers. Has there been a fire? Is everything out there dead?

INT: TRAIN CARRIAGE

Gilda is sitting staring out at the charred landscape. Carlotta enters the carriage, she's wearing an ostentatious fur coat, her hair is in a perfect chignon.

GILDA: Is this a dream?

CARLOTTA: Not yours or mine at any rate. May I sit here?

GILDA: Sure, (after a long silence) I thought you were dead?

CARLOTTA: Do you remember that riddle, when you were a child, the one about dreaming?

GILDA: Yes, I know the one you mean: when I'm awake everything I know to be true is true.

CARLOTTA: When I'm asleep everything I know to be true is false.

GILDA: I know I'm dreaming so is everything I know true or false?

CARLOTTA: If it's true then I'm sleeping, so everything is false...If it's false ...

GILDA: Bullshit based on a false premise

CARLOTTA: Rather elegant little logical puzzle I thought, sorry.

GILDA: So how does it pan out?

CARLOTTA: You studied logic didn't you?

GILDA: Everything is either A or not A.

CARLOTTA: Now that is propaganda. My sweet little a ... her voice trails away.

There is a long silence. Gilda scrutinizes Carlotta, its clear they know each other. Carlotta avoids her gaze and studies the landscape intently

GILDA: I'll never forgive you for leaving.

CARLOTTA: (lighting a cigarette) You seem to forget you sent me away. Wrote me out of the story.

GILDA: You're not allowed to smoke here.

CARLOTTA: What, not even at the end of the world? You always were too keen to live by their rules.

GILDA: Shh, can you hear? They're taking our photograph?

Carlotta reapplies her lipstick gazing at her reflection in her small compact.

GILDA: What determines me, at the most profound level, is the visible, is the gaze that is outside.<sup>3</sup>

Title:

2. Frustration

( A demand which cannot be given to its object)

EXT: AN UNNAMED PROVINCIAL RAILWAY STATION

John is waiting at the station at which the train does not stop. He steps back as the train thunders past. He's not sure if he's the guilty one or the detective. It's so hard for him to remember. There are things he's guilty of, he knows that much. But he's more concerned with absolution if truth be told, than in the nature of his guilt. He's playing with a yo-yo. Fort-da,

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<sup>3</sup> Jacques Lacan *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* Peregrine 1987 p.106

fort-da, game of skill, dexterity and loneliness. You're here, and then you're gone.

INT: TRAIN CARRIAGE.

GILDA: Wait, that was ...

CARLOTTA: Him? Yes, I suppose it was.

GILDA: I thought he was a murderer ... But now I think it's you ...

INT: A SHADY ROOM WITH A HIGH CEILING. A LARGE GILT FRAMED MIRROR RESTS AGAINST THE WALL.

A small boy is alone in the tall shuttered room in an old colonial sandstone house. Far from here. Outside it's a hot summer's day. The boy is playing with his yo-yo, waiting for his mother's return. Fort-da. You're here, and then you're gone.

INT: TRAIN CARRIAGE

CARLOTTA: That's not true Gilda, I was there, with him and with you. I held you up to the mirror – remember? It's true. Don't you see – you're the guilty ones? Why must it always be me?

GILDA: What was it some one said to me once - “ Killing you is killing myself but you know, I'm pretty tired of both us”.

CARLOTTA: I think that's another story.

GILDA: Maybe all stories come to the same thing.

CARLOTTA: Only if you always reduce the narrative to lack.

GILDA: It's always a question of guilt.

CARLOTTA: Sometimes I find your theories too reductive, they're not even yours. You borrowed them and they don't quite fit.

GILDA: I had you followed, it wasn't just Scotty who was on your tail. I waited for word of you. All the way from Montevideo ...

Gilda gets up and sits down next to Carlotta. She takes a small hip flask from her jacket pocket, unscrews the cap. Embracing Carlotta she strokes then grabs her hair, pushes her back against the seat and pours the liquid into her mouth. Carlotta slumps back, dead.

INT: COURTROOM

Gilda is in the dock, her face hidden by a diaphanous veil. The crowd is baying for blood. She stands impassive under the Gaze of the Just.

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENCE: The plaintiff seeks mitigation in view of the alienating function of identification and its close links with a potential rivalry which seeks to eliminate its object.<sup>4</sup> If one does not stress the dialectic of desire one does not understand why the gaze of others should disorganise the field of perception. It is because the subject in question is not that of a reflective consciousness, but that of desire.<sup>5</sup>

There is an outcry in the court. The judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE: Order ... Order in court.

COUNSEL FOR THE PROSECUTION: Your honour, ladies and gentlemen of the jury consider - when Freud describes and theorises, notably in Totem and Taboo the murder of the father as founding the primal horde, he forgets a more archaic murder, that of the mother, necessitated by the establishment of a certain order of the polis.<sup>6</sup> Matricide is an essential precondition of the entry into the symbolic. Therefore I put to you - she cannot claim innocence. The accused is guilty as charged. There can be no mitigation.

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<sup>4</sup> Jacqueline Rose *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* Verso 1989 p. 181

<sup>5</sup> Jacques Lacan *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis* Peregrine 1987 p. 89

<sup>6</sup> Luce Irigaray *The bodily encounter with the mother* p. 36 in ed. Margaret Whitford *The Irigaray Reader* Blackwell 1992



Title:

3. Castration

(A demand for which there is no object)

INT: TRAIN CARRIAGE

A man enters the carriage. Gilda is now alone.

JOHNNY: You must have known I would find you.

GILDA: I wasn't trying to evade you.

JOHNNY: You must think I'm some kind of fool lover.

GILDA: You remind me of some one, some one I knew, in another movie. In Argentina ...

JOHNNY: There are no annulments in Argentina.

GILDA: That's right... I think I remember ...

JOHNNY: You must really think I'm some kind of fool Gilda, I know your game.

Johnny takes a small pearl handled revolver out of his pocket and puts it down on the table between them. Gilda watches him impassively. She takes out a small compact (identical to the one Carlotta used earlier) and reapplies her lipstick.

JOHNNY: You're the criminal. You ruined me. You did this too.

It's true she loved him in a terrible greedy way that could neither soothe nor mitigate, that the camera suspends in the silver brightness nitrate bestows. They're arguing over culpability but Carlotta's murder doesn't really seem to be the issue. They know. They're both guilty.

INT: COURTROOM

JUDGE: In my closing statement ladies and gentlemen of the jury I'd like to remind you that for the Homeric heroes there was no guilty party, only



guilt, immense guilt. That was the miasma that impregnated blood, dust, and tears. With an intuition the moderns have jettisoned and have never recovered, the heroes did not distinguish between the evil of the mind and the evil of the deed, murder and death. Guilt for them is like a boulder blocking the road; it is palpable, it looms. Perhaps the guilty party is as much a sufferer as the victim. In confronting guilt, all we can do is make a ruthless computation of the forces involved.<sup>7</sup>

EXT: THE TRAIN PULLS INTO THE STATION IN THE CITY OF M.

Gilda gets off the train alone.

As the credits appear on black we hear the background noise of a busy railway station.

FEMALE VOICEOVER: Let us not be the guardians of silence, of a deadly silence.<sup>8</sup>

The last thing we hear is the music of Gilda's heels tapping on the pavement as she walks away.

Title:

Epilogue in the Underworld

INT: A labyrinth in the underworld.

Eurydice is wearing a Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti coat and Christian Louboutin shoes. She stands with her back to Orpheus, who is seductive and sombre in Prada. She looks at him using a small hand mirror.

EURYDICE: I cross the river every day, several times, through the corridors and tunnels, the underworld underground.

ORPHEUS: I thought you were waiting when all the while you were leaving.

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<sup>7</sup> Roberto Calasso *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony* Vintage 1994 p.94

<sup>8</sup> Luce Irigaray *The bodily encounter with the mother* p. 44 in ed. Margaret Whitford *The Irigaray Reader* Blackwell 1992.

EURYDICE: It would be easy to say our eyes are dead, but only because we're all killing time.

ORPHEUS: You veil yourself in forgetting.

EURYDICE: This is the city where dreams are blank windows reflecting only sky.

ORPHEUS: Down here we're all always strangers.

EURYDICE: What are the chances you'd find me here after all these years?

ORPHEUS: This journey of yours has no grand trajectory, is an everyday back and forth across the city.

EURYDICE: The years fall away like sleeping, dark and easy, slick with dreaming.

ORPHEUS: Did you dread that I, and a whole army of other spies and private detectives, that life, would finally track you down?

EURYDICE: This journey, everyday, across the city. I'm not waiting I'm leaving.

ORPHEUS: Yet still, how near to me you seem.

EURYDICE: Don't come looking for me anymore.

ORPHEUS: You lie beside me but you've gone.

EURYDICE: I've been leaving for a long time, in increments.

ORPHEUS: What are the chances I'd find you?

EURYDICE: The years fall away like sleeping, dark and easy, slick with dreaming.

ORPHEUS: You've been leaving for a long time, in increments.

EURYDICE: Not waiting, but leaving like sleeping.

VOICE OVER:

The forest creeps, multiplies, encroaches on the city. An army of unlikely allies: the oak and eucalyptus, branch to branch, lead the way; behind them the poplar, sycamore: finally after the long thirst, a tall clean draught of darkness. They fill the avenues and motorways. Vines snake the street lamps, tug at aerials and telegraph poles. Ivy forces through the glass of passing windows, picks all the locks.

Every one is gone by now of course. The open plan offices are deserted, the walls of flat screens blank. Those endless hotel corridors where we no longer meet herald a new season of silence. Letters unread because unsent blow in the breeze and no traffic at all only the leaves playing the wind for a fool. The garage forecourt is an orchard now. What fruit we'll harvest next summer. Will it be enough to keep us going?

We'll have to chart new maps. The A-Z is obscured by verdant anarchy. We'll live in the trees, jump from bough to bough light hearted on the suspension of disbelief. We'll press on further into the darkness, marking the path with breadcrumbs, despite knowing there are no witches to fatten us up, no swan to take us home.

Was there something you'd forgotten to tell yourself? Another missed chance? Another lost story?

## Translating and Mutating Identities: Cypriots who write in English

The story reveals the meaning of what would otherwise remain an intolerable sequence of events.

Hannah Arendt<sup>9</sup>

### Praxis

The story at the heart of this article concerns the friendship, diverse cultural references and the politics of two young poets within the London Cypriot arts Forum. One Turkish Cypriot, the other Greek Cypriot, they shared the political conviction that personal integrity and pleasure must be at the heart of any moral project. This paper will explore how the literatures of Cyprus have shaped and reflected changing and contested national and ethnic subjectivities, both on the island itself, and through the creation of new, diasporic identities. Perhaps because I am a Cypriot, born on that tiny war torn island in the Mediterranean, I'm especially aware of how constructed and contingent identity can be, how mutable and frail are the imagined communities we inhabit as certainties, not a bedrock, more a rickety bricolage of politics, everyday life and literature.

There can be no war without words, and peace must forge its own poetry. Fact and fiction, myth and memory, literature and life are all inextricably bound together. Because the theoretical and practical aspects of being a Cypriot poet who writes in English are inseparable I will explore the tensions of this identity through theory, autobiography and fiction. I want to talk about the relationship between war and literature, but more than that I want to tell a love story.

Identity, an articulable sense of self, is formed out of all the competing discourses that call out to us, or to use Althusser's term, interpellate us. Not just the books they made you read in class, the newspaper you graze on the crowded subway train, but your mother calling you, the neighbourhood boys whistling their ornithological approval as you walk past, the love letters you keep, crumpled at the back of your desk. When I'm in a seminar lecturing third year undergraduates sometimes I

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<sup>9</sup> Hannah Arendt *Isak Dinesen*: (1885-1962), Daguerreotypes Chicago Chicago University Press, 1979) pxx

sense them shrug imperceptibly. It's all just theory - they're impatient to leave behind academia for real life, for the intensity of its rush. They don't want to tail ghosts. I wish I could grasp the thread of their languor and lead them through the labyrinth of my memories to a lost Cypriot summer afternoon. All the clocks have stopped, the heat is a stifling blanket muffling thought, everything abandoned to the cicadas' eternal lullaby. The dark green shutters are drawn for siesta hour in my childhood home on Tanzimat Street in Nicosia. I imagine the apartment is still uninhabited; it's been twenty-six years now since we left. Imagine the walls still pockmarked with bullets holes, the hallway a desert, tumbleweed blowing down the canyon of the corridor, the palm tree still whispering at my window, an abandoned Barbie still waiting to play dress up in my bedroom. Be patient, forgive my digressions as I try to conceptualise and articulate what a diasporal Cypriot identity might be, the traces and erasures it leaves in its wake, its poetry. The digressions themselves might be the map of the journey.

## History

Many civilisations have conquered Cyprus. The Phoenicians, Achaeans, Assyrians, Macedonians, Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Lusignans, Venetians, Ottomans and British have all ruled the island. Cyprus has been a trade route, a rest stop on the way to the Crusades, a place of exile, of refuge, of new beginnings as well as the site of countless wars. Suleyman the Magnificent even had a plan to give it to the Jews as a homeland. Kittim, Yatnana, Kypros, Kibris, Cyprus has had many names and languages and they have all left their mark on the palimpsest of its literature.

Today the majority of islanders, about 80%, are Greek Cypriot. Approximately 18% are Turkish Cypriot; a community swelled since 1974 by mainland Turkish and Kurdish settlers who will soon outnumber the Turkish Cypriot population. There are also small but longstanding Armenian and Maronite communities as well as more recent arrivals: British expatriates, Arabs, Pakistani and far eastern guest workers, East European sex workers and (mainly in the Greek part of the island) armies of tourists, just passing through. Many Cypriots have left the island, for economic as well as political reasons, and the Cypriot diaspora extends from Silicon Valley to Sydney. Since British colonial rule London, in

particular, has been home to a large Greek and Turkish Cypriot community.

To propose the possibility a canon of Cypriot literature in the face of so many diverse influences is a profoundly political act. Even the seemingly straightforward question 'who are you?' will yield an answer that speaks of complex, and sometimes competing allegiances. Are you a Greek / Turkish Cypriot, who values their allegiance to a mainland culture over their island identity? Or are you a Greek / Turkish Cypriot, who feels that your Cypriot identity should be paramount? Is the latter position anything more than idealism, when the two communities speak different languages (although there is a shared demotic vocabulary and accent reviled by both mainland cultures), have different religions, education systems and are separated by barbed wire? If you're a member of the growing Cypriot diaspora are you still a real Cypriot? What claims does your new home have on you? (I'm all mixed up, a chameleon interloper. I was born in Cyprus; my father is Turkish Cypriot, my mother English. I am a Turkish Cypriot, and I am British - I have the requisite passport, education and sense of irony. )

### Big Ideas and Minor Literatures

Language, literature and translation have played a crucial (often destructive) part in the formation of post-colonial Cypriot identities. The Greek Cypriot EOKA violent anti-colonialist campaigns of the 1950s espoused the notion of Enosis, union with Greece, rather than a distinct Cypriot identity. This sense of national identity was fostered by the institutions of the Greek Orthodox Church and by the education system. Cyprus was a small sleepy island but Hellenic ideology gave the Greek Cypriots an idealistic vision, the Megalo Idea - literally the Big Idea of a greater Greece. The Turkish Cypriot leadership responded to Enosis with the concept of Taksim, union with Turkey. As the agrarian base that had maintained Cypriots' cultural similarities (or sense of parallel equilibrium and respect at least) was eroded, away our cultural otherness was emphasised and constructed as part of both communities' political agendas. This cultural divorce was a symptom of a changing social situation but it was then manipulated to hasten political change; and to bring about an independence reliant on Greece, Turkey and Britain, in terms of social identity as well as politically. The education systems (Greek, Turkish and British) and the literatures they promoted, the canons

they constructed, were the instrumental in the formation of post independence identity. These canons became weapons of war, since the canon not only represents national identity but also participates in its production by instilling in people the values of nationalism.<sup>10</sup>

Ignoring the shared culture of everyday life Greek and Turkish Cypriot poetry in the 1960s articulated literary connections to Greece and Turkey, the respective motherlands of the two communities and their political agendas, and served to separate the two communities. “British Colonial education had played an interesting, but under explored, role in the formation of Turkish Cypriot identities. When the island became a Crown colony after three and a half centuries of Ottoman rule, British culture began making inroads into local cultures just as the Ottoman Turkish culture did through their institutions and administrations. Briefly, a Turkish culture different from that of mainland Turkey evolved in Cyprus”.<sup>11</sup>

Writing is a way of defending and asserting spaces of one’s identity that seem contested or controversial. Cypriot poets of that era chose to transcribe the Turkish and Greek aspects of their Cypriotness not because they were more real but precisely because they seemed more threatened, just as Turkish Cypriot poets today emphasise their Cypriotness precisely because that is the threatened aspect of their national identity. As Mustafa Adiloglu, a poet of that post-war generation recalls, “The greatest threat to our community, for our cultural heritage came, at the time, from the Greek Cypriot community and its declared and cherished goals. The latest search by young Turkish Cypriot writers and poets for a Turkish Cypriot identity may have been triggered off by the realisation that the threat to our separate Turkish Cypriot culture now has a different source.”<sup>12</sup>

The Cypriot poets of the 1950s and 1960s wrote, not in their demotic Turkish/ Greek dialects but in the received accent and vocabulary of the respective mainlands. They looked to literary publications in Greece and

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<sup>10</sup> See Gregory Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture: Inventing National Literature*, Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1991 p51.

<sup>11</sup> Mustafa Adiloglu in Niyazi Kizilyurek, Filiz Naldoven et al, *Turkish Cypriot Identity in Literature* London: Fatal Publications, 1990 p17.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Turkey for validation. Turkish Cypriot poets of that generation (Ozker Yashin in particular comes to mind) seem to be thematically engaged by war and national identity. Their writing, whatever its thematic conformity had a declamatory, hyperbolic, romantic, quality. Often their poetry also expressed a sensuous and visceral politics of patriarchy, a (private) love that the (public) struggle was fought for (Fikret Demirag's poetry, for instance, is imbued with this lyricism). The metaphor of motherlands and mother tongues that were everyday phrases gave the male poet a feminine, and biologised, topoi through which to narrativise and justify their Turkish Cypriot identity. This is further complicated by the fact that to have Turkish as a mother tongue is to be heir to a literary legacy that on the mainland too, has been shaped to engender a new national identity. Ataturk's revolution changed the alphabet, 'cleansed' the language of the Persian and Arabic vocabulary and literature of the Ottoman court. In many ways this modernisation of the language gave literature a renewed vigour but the liberty engendered by amnesia is short-lived, in the long run forgetting exacts its (nameless) price.

More recent Turkish Cypriot poetry is marked by a changing political emphasis, by attempts to forge a Turkish Cypriot identity.<sup>13</sup> Recent Turkish Cypriot writing, most notably Mehmet Yashin's work, has explored and questioned national identity and moved towards narratives of fragmentation, plurality and even pastiche. More than postmodern literary strategy the problematisation of fixed identity, of the reliability of the narrator, the collapse of meta-narratives, the margins are reflections of lived experience for Turkish Cypriot writers today. However, ironically, they still find themselves writing in relation to, and within, Turkish literature. Although the mixed language (oral) traditions of folk poetry on the island are an invaluable reminder that the binarist story of bicomunal oppositions are an imposed narrative, the contemporary Cypriot must negotiate the literary markets of the two mainlands in order to achieve literary recognition.<sup>14</sup> They must negotiate positions somewhere between the extremes of assimilation or marginalisation in the

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<sup>13</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Turkish Cypriot literature see Mehmet Yashin, *The Question of Identity and Its Socio-historical basis in Turkish Literature* p33-79 in Niyazi Kizilyurek, Filiz Naldoven et al, *Turkish Cypriot Identity in Literature* (London: Fatal Publications, 1990) and (ed.) Mehmet Yashin *Step-Mother tongue: From Nationalism to Multiculturalism: Literatures of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*, (London: Middlesex University Press, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> For a discussion of contemporary Cypriot literatures see (ed) Mehmet Yashin, *Step-Mother tongue: From Nationalism to Multiculturalism: Literatures of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*, London: Middlesex University Press, 2000 p 8.



mother country. In the context of their Cypriot identity their work exhibits the characteristics of minor literatures that Deleuze and Guattari identify. "Whereas in major literatures the writer can be engaged by individual concerns, minor literature is completely different; its cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics.... Everything takes on a collective value.... The political domain has contaminated every statement ".<sup>15</sup>

This characteristic of poetry in Cyprus, that it will always be read politically, is both a limitation and strength. Because the Turkish Cypriot literary scene is so small its poetry has an epistolatory, intimate quality. The intensity of reactionary vehemence nourishes as well as hampering creativity. Back in 1988 I performed a poem at a tiny Turkish Cypriot festival in North London, what seemed to be an innocuous and ordinary local neighbourhood festival with face painting, music, a barbecue. One of the poems I read out contained the lines "If not my birthplace then my memory is an occupied country." The next day a Turkish Cypriot newspaper published in Cyprus ran an editorial calling me a traitor. Their reaction strengthened my belief that poetry is important, that it can make things happen. English audiences at my performances were altogether more tolerant, unshockable. Poems that explored other equally, if not more important aspects of my identity like gender and desire did elicit some reaction but on the whole their numb equanimity saw poetry as a minor lifestyle luxury, part of a bohemian *mise en scene* and not as a matter of life and death.

### Imagining New Subjectivities: Being Cypriot in English

I am not whole  
But parts of me have been torn up and left behind.  
No, not my heart  
Much more – my tongue.

Is being Cypriot in English a translation or a mutation of identity? I write in English, in the language of the islands colonial masters, I am heir to their literature; the ties of language, education and literary engagement are

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<sup>15</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986 p17.

more binding than biology .I feel fraudulent if I claim to be a Cypriot poet. It is easier to see myself as a British writer, as part of London's rich multiculturalism. However, that multiculturalism, whilst affording a measure of inclusivity, still cannot solve or dissolve the question of my Cypriot identity. Multiculturalism presupposes, rather than deconstructing, the hybridity of different authentic ethnic identities. "The Eurocentric roots of the discourse of multiculturalism marginalizes and pushes the other into a pigeonhole of authenticity in the name of respecting other cultures, reproducing, by default, some of the premises of colonialism".<sup>16</sup>

London's diasporic Cypriot communities are diverse and have no cohesive cultural identity. Class determines their conceptualisation of Cypriot identity as much as ethnicity. Educated Cypriots many of whom came to London in order to distance themselves from community politics have usually adopted assimilationist strategies; their children often feel little real connection to the island. Many Cypriot immigrants were peasants who came to work long hours in garment factories or as small scale entrepreneurs. They often nurtured a nostalgic patriotism, keen to protect the values of their agrarian upbringing. For this first (Turkish and Greek) Cypriot generation's nationalism was bound up with their emphasis on family life and values. The often authoritarian way in which patriarchal edicts were imposed, especially on daughters, served to give the second generation of Greek and Turkish Cypriot youth common experiences (with each other as well as with other immigrant communities for instance, those from the Caribbean and the Asian sub-continent) of culture clash, conflict with parental authority and a marginalisation within the dominant culture.

Allegiances and reactions to the political situation in Cyprus vary amongst the second generation; many feel distanced from and disqualified from taking part in the discussion. Some have adopted a chauvinism that parodies and surpasses their parents since they have no experience of life in Cyprus or sense of Cypriotness that might create any dissonance between received ideology and lived reality. Their vehement allegiance, their willingness to re-enact the conflict in the schoolyard can be seen as their attempt to perform a belonging, to make up for the deficiency of being second generation, usually of only having a very limited ability to

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<sup>16</sup> (ed) Mehmet Yashin, *Step-Mothertongue: From Nationalism to Multiculturalism: Literatures of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*, London: Middlesex University Press, 2000 p 8.

actually speak Greek or Turkish. Nevertheless the lie that Greek and Turkish Cypriot cannot live side by side is compromised by every day life. Greek and Turkish Cypriots live in the same areas of London, use the same bakeries. Symbolically, the biggest firm of Cypriot wedding organisers and caterers in London is both Turkish and Greek, serves both communities.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s there were two attempts to create Cypriot cultural organisations that included both Greek and Turkish Cypriots and tried to address the second generation Cypriots, who had been born and brought up in London. The impetus for the collectives Cypriot Harmony and The Cypriot Arts Forum came from young Cypriots trying (with varying degrees of success) to establish careers in the creative industries as writers, actors, photographers, filmmakers, artists and musicians. Mihalakis Pountouris aka Haji Mike, the lynch pin of Cypriot Harmony, was inspired by the Afro-Caribbean collective Soul to Soul and the creative output of the group emphasised the commonality of immigrant experience, and celebrated a hybridisation of Cypriot and British cultures, including Afro-Caribbean and Asian influences. Cypriot Harmony and The Cypriot Arts Forum were both largely, if not lavishly financed through local government funding and some private sponsors, particularly the (Greek Cypriot) Bank of Cyprus, who played a determining role in the creative agenda and output of both groups. The local authorities wanted unelitist accessible products for the local community, which reflected the multicultural local communities and promoted cooperation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

Cypriot Harmony provided adult education classes in DJing, writing, drama, cultural events as well as organising concerts. As well as organising experimental theatre, art exhibitions and concerts The Cypriot Arts Forum produced plays and story telling workshops on Cypriot themes for children in schools and libraries. The private (mainly Greek Cypriot) sponsors also had their own ideology, the promotion of peace in general was fine, but nothing that explicitly opposed or even problematised the policies of the (Greek) Republic of Cyprus foreign policy was welcomed. There were also commercial concerns. A play about the conservation of turtles had to be rewritten because it was felt to be too opposed to tourism. Rather than deconstructing or rearticulating the notion of our oppositional ethnic identity, Cypriotness was deproblematised. Promoting multiculturalism by eliding such difficulties often entrenched, rather than

threatening chauvinism. The depth of the racism that emerged was also at times hard to fathom. At one of the management committee meetings a middle aged Greek Cypriot woman grabbed my hand unexpectedly, tears in her eyes. "There I've done it" she said tremulously, "I've held the hand of a Turkish Cypriot. I forgive you." she assured me. To forgive is to imply responsibility. I didn't feel in need of forgiveness, would have preferred to remain untouchable.

### Narrating a Self and the Politics of Pleasure

One writes to explain oneself to some one (perhaps most of all to one's self) and because I felt marginalized within the literary world I aspired to be a part of, an imagined community, a sense of 'home', where everything didn't need a footnote or an explanation into the mores of the old country or the new, where there were simultaneous broadcasts across cultures, decades, languages; became more important, more urgent, less possible. Knowing Lysandros gave me a sense of writing for someone who wished to reappropriate, to untangle, the same myths and narratives with the same light hearted candour. Perhaps that's too rarefied a way of putting it; I'd found a playmate to write with. Our imaginary worlds were different to be sure, but it was possible to make common ground. My connection to Lysandros was forged on many levels, the most immediate being our approach to writing. Both of us were keen to evade, not politics, but the banal strictures of politically correct platitudes expected by some within the Cypriot Arts Forum. The performance he prepared and performed at the Hampstead Theatre in 1991 drew on many of the disparate cultural sources that engaged me too. These included London's club scene in the 1980s, The Face magazine, as well as shared literary influences. The burden of signification on minor literatures, that they must respond and refer explicitly to political agendas, means that too often the pleasure principle, rather than denoting a Barthesian liberatory strategy, is seen as decadent irresponsibility; and the politics of the everyday, of the appetites and allegiances of the body, of sexuality, is erased. Much that could articulate a new sanctity is lost with the profane.

Ours was a literary friendship and we shared the same strategic attitude to literary tactics (for it was a matter more of tactics than technique): the strategy of mixing high and low culture, out of similar references becomes a bonding process in itself. My connections to Lysandros were the ties of friendship, shared tastes, coincidences (he was the lover of a

childhood friend I'd lost touch with) and complicity. Our complicity was our belief that pleasure was a political, an ethical imperative. What we enjoy unites us at some level, at the level of bread and olives as well as poetry, and more profoundly, perhaps more really, than political platitudes and political correctness. Lysandros' shared references eclecticism and hedonism gave me a sense of coming home. This new friendship, a beginning, even in the face of looming mortality, showed both courage and generosity. The days were getting shorter, darkness creeping in. Priorities become clearer when time is at a premium. Lysandros' friendship, his hunger for life and poetry was a unifying force, the basis of a new politics but it also strengthened my ethical fidelity to literary pleasure as the most important, the founding principal of a new Cypriot literary community. Literatures of political correctness stifle and stunt with their orthodoxy.

I can't see this green line  
textures are more useful

and sometimes our little towns are quiet,  
and only flags flutter as tributes to the silence,  
and I poke my tongue  
into the hole of history,  
and wriggle my toes in the damp sand.<sup>17</sup>

His poetry rejected political correctness; his patriotism was a subversive,  
sexual, appetite.

I can't see this green line, I just can't see it.  
I can only see gold,  
and the eyes of my people blacker than embers,  
and the strong smell of their love making.<sup>18</sup>

### A Community of Imagined Crowds

Canons create boundaries it's true, but we mustn't forget that reading is also an act of subversion, one that can, through the promiscuous and polymorphously perverse mating of texts in the reader's mind, destroy

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<sup>17</sup> Lysandros Pitharas

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

boundaries. I read Seferis, Elytis, Cavafy, Lawrence Durrell, make them my own. They wander through crowded corridors brushing shoulders with Nazim Hikmet and Jean Rhys, Borges, Eliot and Emily D, Atilla İlhan; who ever I'm reading right now. I take liberties. I lay claim to the same mythology that Hellenism uses as its cultural self-justification, which Freud uses to universalise phallocracy. I'm not trying to get Medusa to crack a smile like Cixious, or make Medea loveable like Christa Wolff. It's just where I live, who I hang out with. And place those references in the context of contemporary culture, for instance in cinema: Yeshilcam and Hollywood, Turkan Soray, Sirkean lush numbness.

I want to celebrate the aesthetic power, the artistry of these forms but also to note that even that that we might dismiss as junk as clutter is worth considering for its cultural ramifications. The detritus of popular culture is important here, the potency and power it has can subvert ideologies with its vapidness. A film that played Demis Roussos' saccharine kitsch classic Forever and Ever as a sound track as it showed bombs dropping from a summer sky would seem comic, heartless even. Yet, ironically, the tune was no.1 in the Turkish as well as the Greek pop charts in July 1974. Both communities listened to the same ridiculous tune as we waited for the bombs to drop.

### Photograph

I'm looking at a 10 by 8 inch print of a black and white photograph, taken at the Jazz Cafe in Camden, London, almost ten years ago, a young man and woman on stage. Lysandros Pitharas: he's to the right of the picture: tall, dark, handsome (just like the fortune tellers promise) in a roll neck sweater and crumpled hounds tooth check jacket, looking like Philip (or Christopher, if that's more to your taste) Marlowe after a long dark night of the soul spent cruising with Genet. He's saying something, speaking into a microphone, perhaps reading from the sheaf of papers in his left hand, his right hand outstretched. Alev Adil: she's to the left, her curly hair piled up on her head, a pinstriped jacket over a Westwood corset. I look like I've raided the wardrobes of an 18th century trollop and a 20th century preppy. I'm watching him carefully, one hand in my Levis pocket, a half smile half obscured by the microphone. I don't remember what she/ I was thinking in that moment. It was a press preview for the Camden Cypriot Arts Festival. There's a big banner behind us that says so and

gives the dates 23 June to 19 July 1991. I've a terrible sense of time - last month seems decades away, memories from ten years ago are still so fresh. The photograph freezes the moment, a distant extant present tense of ghosts. I haven't worn my hair like that in years. Lysandros died exactly six months after the photo was taken. Last year I heard that the photographer, Andy, died a couple of years back. A friend, Haris, saw the obituary in Parikiaki, the London Greek newspaper. Time freezes, melts, spills through the shadows and light of the photograph. "Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe...It is because each photograph always contains this imperious sign of my future death that each one, however attached it seems to the excited world of the living, challenges each of us, one by one, outside of any generality".<sup>19</sup>

Lysandros was easy to love. Those who are irretrievably lost to us are easy to eulogise but that is not my (only) intention. I'm not here to glorify him, but his writing means a lot to me. I value his poems, not just for their raw urgency, the race against time and death, which imbue his poetry with honesty and intensity, but also because his poems seemed familiar to me. We shared many of the same or similar emotions and influences: an infatuation with cities, the sense of being haunted by the Island to which we both felt a strong sense of belonging and of distance too. The echoes of Greek mythology, of Cavafy and Kerouac too, and off the page the ceaseless, promiscuous cacophony of contemporary culture called to us with its dazzling irreverence and irony, as well as alienation and anomie.

Perhaps now, the centre cannot hold and every one is the citizen of a hybrid culture, of an identity built on disparate influences, but within that flux a sense of needing to belong remains. I felt at home with Lysandros, I felt that for both of us the sense of belonging was a fragile and mutable thing, not easily defined or delineated. We tried to make it all write, to put it into words but really this sense of belonging, of complexity was a fragile thing, strung somewhere between the spoken and the written word, grandiose and humorous in turn, words dependent for their meaning on the writers tone of voice, bound to the passing moment, to new contingent conceptualisations of community and family.

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<sup>19</sup> Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* London: Fontana 1984 p97.

## Darker

It was getting darker and Lysandros was afraid of the dark. He recounted a childhood memory, remembering the beginning of darkness and waiting. Both his parents worked long hours, running a clothing factory. He and his sister were cared for by a nanny who was sweetness and light in his parents' company, so charming that they would never have believed how monstrously she behaved when left alone with the children. She would punish Lysandros by locking him the cellar, in the dank, dusty darkness for hours, minutes, perhaps centuries. Whole lifetimes he'd wait in the cellar, afraid that the moths would burst through their fat hard chrysalises, would find him there, and caress him with their terrible furry wings. He'd conjure up that darkness in the warm glow of Mustafa's north London living room. I strain to hear the grain of his voice as he told that story. I recall the candles flickering, Mustafa tending the flames. He harvested the light for Lysandros.

I can't hear him anymore; I've forgotten his voice. Although if he called tomorrow I'd recognise him. Hello? Lysandros? Is that you? I don't know if he wrote the story down, I don't have it to hand. Sitting here amongst piles of old poems, flyers for performances, newspaper cuttings, I don't trust my memory. Perhaps that small boy waiting in the dark is some one else, not yet born, the memory is a premonition that I dreamt was Lysandros. I used to love moths when I was a child, their hand span limpid powdered wings rippling the air. There was urgency in Lysandros' writing. He was writing against time:

my days are numbered,  
like the beating of a digital clock,  
rearranging its numerals in sequence in the glow of the dark,  
silently, inexorably,  
marking the passage of regularity with its sombre numbers  
and every beat is a new moment,  
every life is a revelation,  
every memory.

He was writing to make himself anew with each sentence, and also to save  
himself, to leave a trace:



staring at my own eyes and exploring their light  
oh what obsessions, what pleasures still lay unrecorded  
lost papers, lost poems, lost pleasures <sup>20</sup>

Writing for posterity, in order to leave a textual presence, but the act of writing itself was as important for him, its physicality as well as the transcendence of that physicality. In Poem, he says that “the Poem is not transcendent”, that it not a “fortress of truth”, “the poem is no solution”.

The Poem is nothing more or less than myself,  
the cage of bone and dream in which we sing a song already written for us.<sup>21</sup>

When Lysandros speaks of the poem “as a song already written for us” he seems to alluding to a kind of destiny. This could be just the traditional Mediterranean fatalism that causes us to still wear ancient talismans to ward off the evil eye but to me it’s also a sense that language itself is a kind of destiny. Language speaks us. All our poetry is a play, a permutation of words that whisper reminders of other words, other poems, and other lives. The food on the table is fresh, but we fill our mouths with the silver syntax of ancient cutlery.

## Funeral

On the last day of his life, in the afternoon Lysandros whispered his last poem about Apollo, the gleaming warrior now disguised as a thousand reeling birds, and slipped irretrievably from the spoken to the written word. His funeral was as theatrical, dignified and unconventional as he was: the gilt splendour of the Greek Orthodox Church in Camden, with all its traditional incense and ritual but also with, controversially, unbelievers, heathens: Turkish Cypriots reading elegies. I’m not sure who persuaded the Greek Orthodox priest to allow such a heresy. Mustafa made sure that he was buried in Highgate cemetery as he’d wished .The flowers were white, he’d written: “Anoint me with white flowers when I lose my blessed breath”

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<sup>20</sup> Lysandros Pitharas

<sup>21</sup> ibid

although there was no “crown of white flowers, jasmine, held by a golden thread”.<sup>22</sup>

I can’t quite capture the grain of his voice, the cadences of his speech, the swoop of a downward inflection at the end of each line but I can still hear the sound of the handful of earth each mourner flung on the coffin.

Years later, when Mustafa opened the tidy little suitcase that held Lysandros’ work they spilled out, yellow pages, like doves, jaundiced with age, or bleached ravens. Silence flocked and filled the room; the air was heavy, as if rippled by invisible moths. His words are a challenge to that silence, if not a refutation of it.

### Memory and the Impossibility of Fidelity

But am I just putting words on a dead man’s eyes. In whose shiny currency are my words minted? Where is the most unjust betrayal? “Is the most distressing, or even the most deadly infidelity that of a possible mourning which would interiorise within us the image, idol or ideal of the other who is dead and lives only in us? Or is it that of the impossible mourning, which, leaving the other his alterity, respecting thus his infinite remove, either refuses to take or is incapable of taking the other within oneself, as in the tomb or vault of some narcissism?”<sup>23</sup>

I’m speaking for no one but myself but that isn’t to trivialise the issue, to remove it from the possibility of political change. “What makes a narration a political act is not simply that this narration invokes the struggle of a collective subjectivity, but rather that it makes clear the fragility in the unique.”<sup>24</sup> I wanted to tell a story, to remember Lysandros and also to think about subjectivity, how the process of interpellation can be a deterministic process but not one that denies agency. Identity is open to fluctuation, translation and mutation as new unexpected interpellations arise, as names call to other names, and new names are enunciated in their echo. All the names seem to be aliases, disguises, not that there is a definitive identity to be stripped down to.

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<sup>22</sup> *ibid*

<sup>23</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Memoires: For Paul de Man* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986 p6.

<sup>24</sup> Paul A Kottman Translator’s Introduction in Adriana Cavarero *Relating Narratives* London: Routledge, 2000 px

This isn't a story of friendship despite the boundaries of Greek/Turkish, male/female, first generation/second generation Cypriot identities but because of our shared sense of duty to negotiate those oppositions as playfully but as intensely, as ethically as we could. We mustn't seek to erase the old stories about our Cypriotness, its differences and commonalities. But we can try to retell, to recontextualise, them. "All those who fail to reread are obliged to read the same story everywhere"<sup>25</sup>. We are more than what we say and do. Friendship has a transformative power, like literature it can turn "boundaries and limits into in-between spaces through which the meanings of political and cultural authority are negotiated."<sup>26</sup>

Lysandros was more than the photograph on my desk, the yellowing sheaf of poems in my hand, a name now written (like Keats') on water. Most of all it is that loving, living excess of his presence as he'd turn down the volume on the atrocities on the TV news, put on a Rembetika record, roll a spliff and read out a poem he'd written that afternoon, that inspires my belief that telling stories changes us, saves us from repetition, through digression gives us a new home. There's politics in poetry, and the possibility of new, as yet unimagined, communities.

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<sup>25</sup> Roland Barthes *S/Z* New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1974 p16.

<sup>26</sup> Homi Bhaba, *Nation and Narration* London: Routledge, 1990 p4.

# The Archive of Lost Objects



GREEK TROOPS FIGHTING WITH THE ALLIES

خانه  
سور  
قوت  
انقضاء

زله جابه

انكدر غمدهم ايمكده سكه بنده يك

سقه بر عالم كركه كد طله سيره اجوه  
زله جابه ايسه مره قوت توله سوره خنكانه



# The Archive of Lost Objects



GREEK TROOPS FIGHTING WITH THE ALLIES

خانه  
سور  
قوت  
انقضاء

زله جا

اندر عهد هجوم اتحاديه سده بنده يك

بقه بر عالم كركه كه طله سيره اجوه  
زله جا اينه مره قوت تو لم سر مختار